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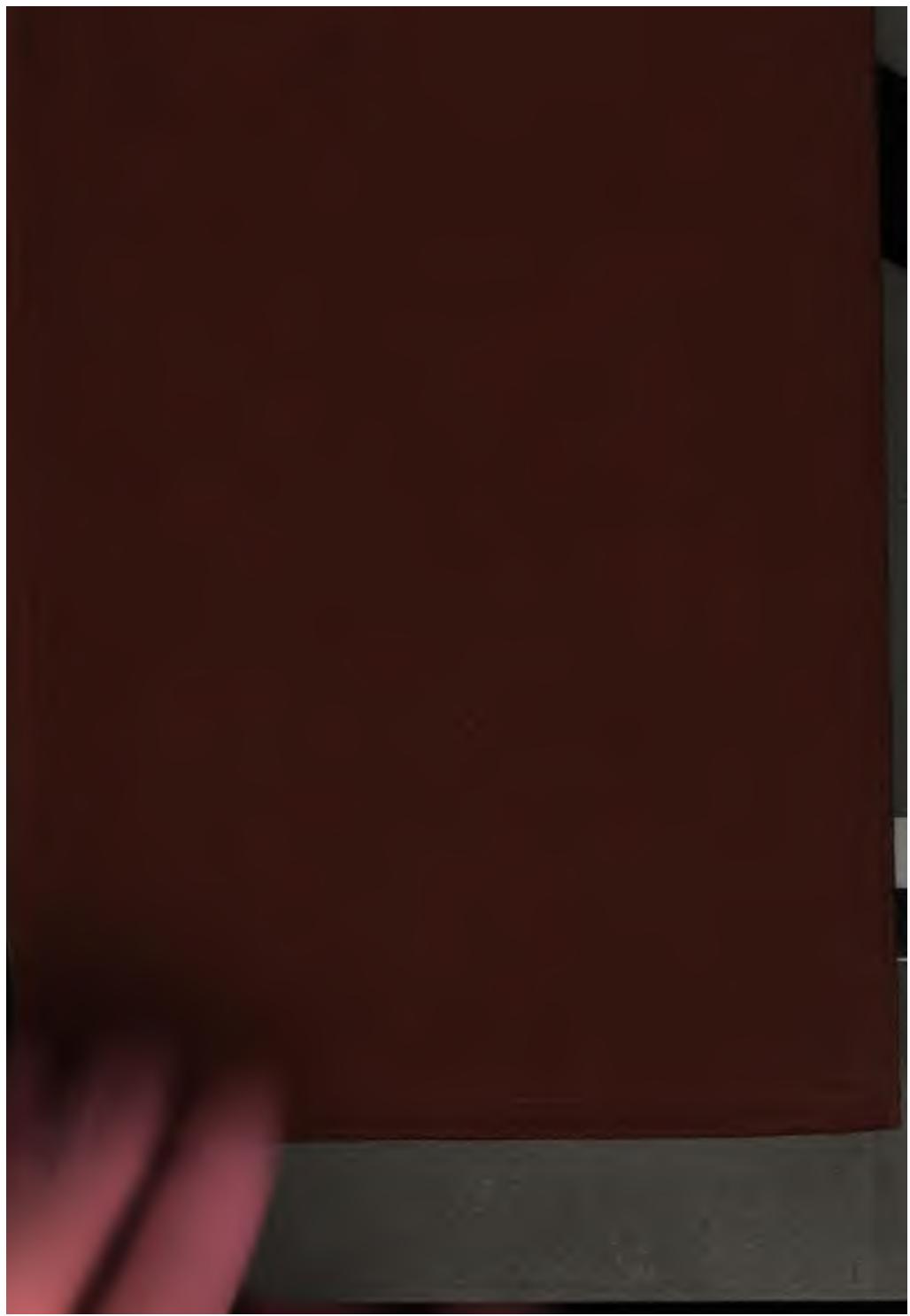
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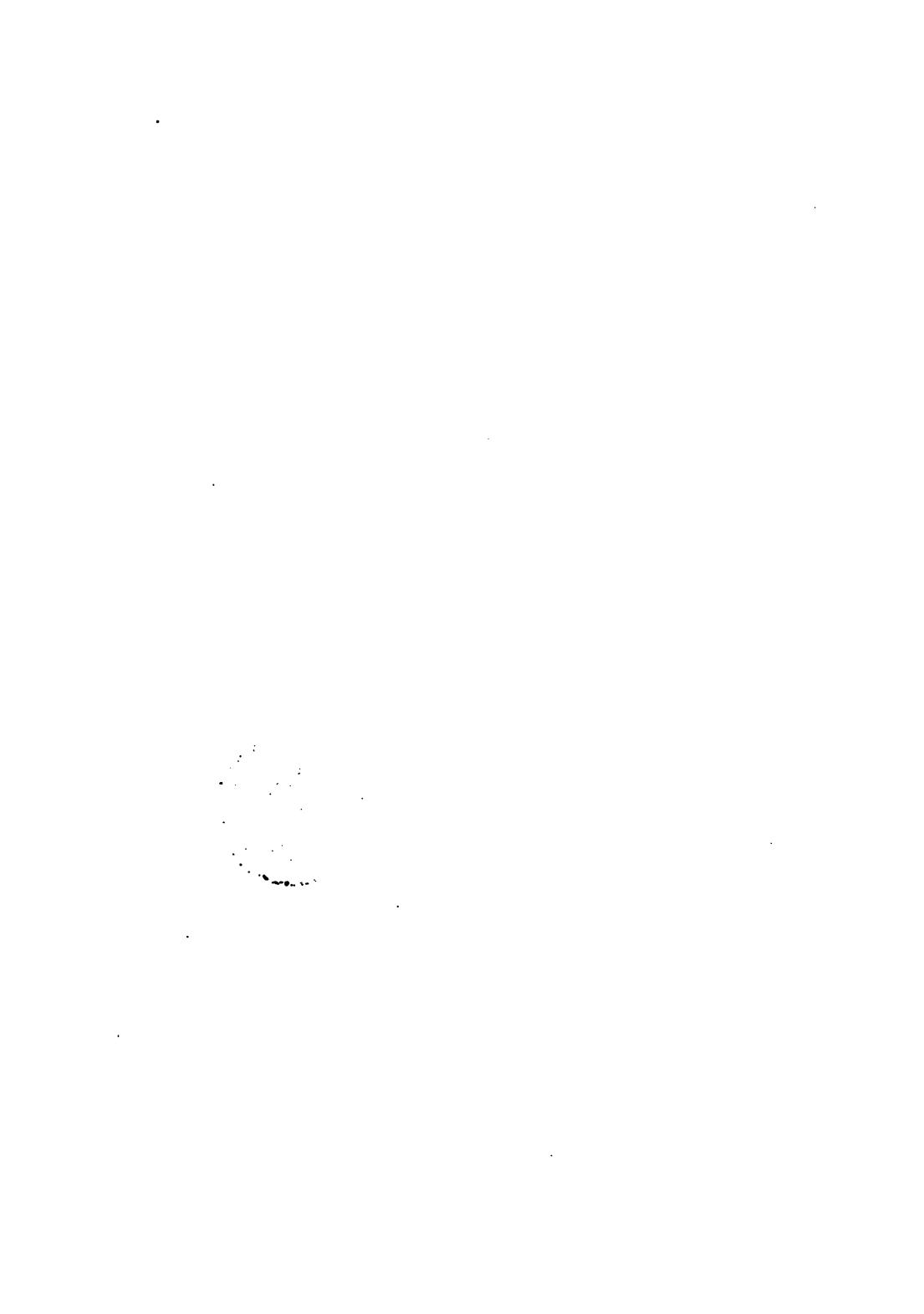


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GRANTLEY VIVIAN.



GRANTLEY VIVIAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“TOWN TALK OF CLYDA,” “ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE,”

ETC. ETC.

“Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus, nostri est farrago libelli.”

Juv. Sat. i.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



LONDON:

WYMAN & SONS, 74-5, GREAT QUEEN STREET,
LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS, W.C.

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GRANTLEY VIVIAN.

CHAPTER I.

I THINK that it is in “*Delphine*” that Madame de Staël, speaking of Léonce, says, “A man may brave *les convenances*, a woman dare not.”

Now though Corinne gave herself full, or rather French tether, I have always heeded her advice, looking at her as at the parson, and doing as she said, not as she did.

To come down from the sublime to the mundane, from Corinne to Julia Dacre.

I did begin to consider that the lengthened sojourn of this young man with me might

give rise to comment. How should the world know that he had been the most kind and tender friend to me, or that, to him, my home had been as the haven to the storm-tost bark?

But now we were getting to August, and the *Ava* reached Southampton the first week in May. Every bit of business for the present had been thoroughly gone through. There were no more tenants to be routed up for arrears, no more improvements or repairs needing that able, tasteful head, which was all the more wanted amongst his own folks at Castle Vivian after this long delay.

I remember a regular old *causeuse*, who in my childhood used to sit and tell us tales by the hour, and when she anticipated events, she used to say, "Childern, I have got before myself." So have I; and so will go back to the evening when Susan went out "viletting," and hear what she gathered. She was dressed in bright array, had "piclates, srimps, and mam'lade in Mrs. Fibber's own dark parlour." This visit reminded me of poor little Copperfield's to the Heaps.

“ Well, Susan, I have always liked you, dear, and never thought you ‘imperent,’ as the rest do; and I allays say how well you ‘did’ for old Guy.”

“ Iss, indeed, and he ware a quare un as any young ‘ooman ever did for,” said the little minx.

“ Susan, what relation is Mr. Vivian to your missus ?”

“ None whatever, not the distantest. They never sor her nor him till they met, board ship, coming from the Indies.”

“ Lor, Susan, you don’t say so? Come, you don’t eat your srimps — take another piclate, do. Never sor each other till just then—lor ! ”

“ Iss, indeed.”

“ Well, but Susan, how long will they go on trapesying the country together ?”

“ There’s no knowing, Mrs. Fibber; he don’t want to stir his stumps, I’m certain sure.”

“ Are they very fond of each other, Susan, dear ?”

“ Oh, so fond! iss, indeed. He’ll sit by

her side by the hour, talking real sense sometimes, sometimes rubbidge, about cutting his throat and drownding, and that like. I hears a good deal. I've a light foot, and I steals in afore he can possibly shut up. I hears him say one morning as Greta Jocelyn were a bird from a bad nest, and her name was a lie. He quite made poor missus cry. So you see he don't like Greta; no more he didn't ought, a gentleman like him. He likes old Bab, and calls her a 'brick,' and Miss Isabelle 'l'immortelle.' The cook and me's as sharp again as Dorcas; but Dorcas has had the best schooling, and she says 'l'immortelle' is the French for an old thing as never dies. 'Tis Miss Patty he walks with most, and he gave her the chitterling she hangs at her belt. Dorcas had it from Miss Mount, the milliner as works at Miss O'Drawl's. They say he writes her no end of letters, and posts 'em at Glendinning's gate in the trunk of the silver beech. I can't catch what 'tis he calls Patty; I wish I could—iss, indeed; leastways, 'tis something heavenly, like seraphim or cherubim. It begins with chim."

That very evening, I think it was, that the first faint rumour reached me from dear old Bab, spite of Miss Isabelle, of all this. It is a foolish thing to make a foe, and wittingly I had never done so, well knowing that from almost all I should receive far harder measure than it is in me to mete out to them. Yet, with all my circumspection, foes had been made for me. Of course, the tongues of Murphy, Mac, and Annesley had been steeped in vinegar, and, among a certain class, did me no good.

I had not been hard on poor Guy's tenants, who, owing to the old man's long illness, had not been whipped up sharp of late. The MacWeary's were three quarters behind, and I had to wait for the O'Drawl's long-promised rents from Tipperary. Fitz-Flash asked me would I take a bill for the next 29th of February? but as that would not be due till '58, and this was only '55, I said I preferred taking it by instalments. The amount was £145. His first and only instalment as yet had been a fine salmon caught at the tide, with Baldwin Fitz-Flash's kind compliments, and

a group of wax flowers, with Nelly Fitz-Flash's kindest love—a great deal of kindness, but little pay. Pertun was the only one who was rude to me; by that I knew he would pay, and he did.

Neither was I at war with my tenants, either at the "Barley Mow," the "Wrestlers," or the "Jolly Dogs." Of course, amongst the Nonconformists, I was a sort of "minnow Miss Coutts," and amongst those of a laxer persuasion, I was like poor Greta—more given to missionizing than mischief. If I met a big boy coming out from billiards, I warned *him*, and not his father; or a little one with a cigar, I did not tell his mother.

Poor Tierça believed in me, but that was little compliment—Tierça believed in everything. And for her Juan's sake, Patty looked at me kindly. *Si je n'étais pas la rose, j'avais été près d'elle.* I had breathed the same air—"aura"—as the interesting "jar." What then had I done? I had built the Baptist chapel—I had raised the Baptist school! It was to do the Saviour's work I raised them, that repentance and a good life might be

taught from their pulpits, and a sound and useful education spread broadcast in a large population, where, alas, it was woefully needed. But, no; had I raised a racket court, a music hall, or even an Alhambra, Vesper Prime and Dr. Ritus would sooner have forgiven me. Mr. Prime always gave his little pony so sharp a cut as he passed them, that from being the sweetest-tempered little cob a reverend Jehu ever drove, it became the very spitefullest, reared, kicked, and broke the traces. Having spilt his master just at the chapel gate, it had got a bad name, and so it sold for nothing, and succeeded an old donkey in a vegetable cart.

Doctor Ritus never went down that street, for he was one that

“Would rather face a crocodile
Than pass a Baptist school.”

They say woman, because usually so much purer, is, if vile, viler than man. So man usually less censorious, is, *ceteris paribus*, doubly so, and the gall masculine more bitter

by far, because let flow on fewer occasions. At all events, never was verjuice so bitter as the Anglican verjuice they had bottled for me. If Prime and Ritus did not float the scandal, they never, as the ministers of the gospel of charity, sought to put it down, although, through dear Miss Bab, they well knew the touching tie that bound us—my only brother's mournful death.

And now, oh, poor humanity, how one must sometimes blush for you !

When I came to Ravendale, my excessive ugliness was all the theme ; now, they turned to my good looks, to make *them* tell against me. Then, I had “told half a hundred years, if a day ;” now, “I was but forty, and oh, what so winning as ‘fat, fair, and forty ?’” They added ten years to Vivian’s age, as they had deducted from mine. My eyes, that they had called “glarers,” were now “intellectual, though piercing ;” my bushy brows they had called “bridges,” they now said “gave an arch expression to my face.” My nose, that had been a “hideous turn-up,” was now a “*petit nez*

retroussé.” My hair, that they said “could never be my own, unless I had bought it,” was now cast up against me,—“roaming the country with that young man, with those rosy cheeks and that beautiful hair.” All very well for Cæsar’s wife to be suspected, with the stout old Roman to defend her; but I was not Cæsar’s wife, I had no one to defend me. I stood alone. I could not take counsel with the other accused; he was a gentleman so thorough, he would have been off with a bound. A stop I determined to put to the absurdity. All the pluck of my soldier race was up. I determined we would show in public, and die game together.

I had, till now, quite shirked society. I was in deep sorrow, and immersed in business, and did not dream that my good name could be whistled down the wind for my kindness to a man young enough to be my son. I had been bent on getting him off to Castle Vivian; now, for the present, I determined he should stay.

Acting on the advice of a worldly old friend of mine at Southsea, I decided on

entertaining my defamers, not to heap coals of fire on their heads, exactly ; I don't believe you can do anything of the sort. All I can say is, that I have had the roundest abuse and hardest measure from those who, as the Orientals would say, "had broken my bread and tasted of my salt." The vituperative and slanderous have no finer feelings to appeal to. You can only silence them by means of their own selfishness.

My opinion seems a hard one, yet I can endorse it from a worldly old Southsea dowager. A high official, years ago at Portsmouth, had introduced an unwelcome innovation into the dockyard, and she said, "Julia, tell old St. George there's nothing a dinner or a dance won't do. Let them give the old fogies a dinner, and the young folks a dance—tell him to entertain, not to explain. They will like the dinner and the dance, while all will hate his reasons ; and his changes in the yard will soon be the finest thing in the world." And a very wise old lady too. So now we put our heads together. Grantley declared his pious libe-

rality should be sounded forth again in the *Gazette*, so proposed giving the Baptist schools another tea-fight at the Raven Cap.

“ You know, Julia, Miss Susannah shall walk on first, with all the pretty girls under her eye; I’ll come last with the plain ones under mine; and the two plainest, with the scraggiest arms and the shortest sleeves shall walk either side of me, and I’ll be expounding with my eyes up, and they listening with theirs cast down. Oh, won’t it be saintly as we pass hand in hand ? ”

Greta was, of course, of our committee.

“ What is done to the glory of God, oh, Mr. Vivian, should not be scoffed at,” said the young methody.

“ But it is done to my own glory, Miss Jocelyn; surely at myself I may scoff. Conjure me up, in the rear, marching between the aped-armed shivering Baptist girls, singing,—

‘ Oh, that ’ll be joyful,’

as we get back to Wasper’s, where they shall be ‘ again entertained at a plentiful

repast by the pious liberality of Grantley Vivian, Esq.' ”

Then again, a picnic at the Heron Height was determined on, and after that a summer ball at Grove Cottage. Poor Greta ! one could see the Allegra in her rising at all this sunny merriment, but she declined joining in it, we knew why. When Colonel Jocelyn was not by, she was often exposed to cruel scorn. We did not press it, of course.

Grantley said, “ Now Julia, mind, I find the wine. I'll have none of those silvery-tongued touters coaxing poor hapless woman into the doctored fire water they call wine, which they will swear has been in bottle ever since some date *anno mundi*—*anno domini* being all too new. I shall have it up from the Castle Vivian bins. Admiral Chester was a dry old salt, and the best taster in the country's side. Let's tell Susan, she'll tell Fibber, and once they know they are to have old Chester's wine, they will all make a point of coming. And after ‘ Todgers has done it,’ and

flabbergasted Ravendale, what say you, Julia, to bringing our two good neighbours to spend a little time at Castle Vivian, before I go off to Scotland and the grouse and work again?"

"Do you call that work, Grantley?"

"Dear friend, the pleasure a fellow has no heart in, is the very hardest work."

Well, after I had carried my point, and shown myself "unblushing" in public, I thought it would be a delightful scheme; and when Bab and Miss Isabelle came to tea in the evening, I proposed it. Poor old Bab burst out into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, and her four great knitting needles shot past her nose as if they had St. Vitus.

"Do forgive me, don't frown, Izzbull, but Miss Dagger, shan't we be a queer lot for poor Vi to show first, coming to his new kingdom? Like George the First with his German beauties, Melusina, the Schulenberg, and the Duchess of Kendal?" She stopped, for Izzbull looked like Iser, "dark as winter."

The poor old lady was not great at history, but I rather think these names all belonged to one woman ; however, she was not one to be very proud of knowing.

Poor dear Miss Bab went on.

“Such prodigious ugly creatures you know they were ; you must forgive me, Vi, laugh I must, conjuring you up on the box, driving in your beauties, like King George.”

It was very rude of her ; Isabelle looked dreadfully offended and silly.

“Ah, never mind,” he said, appeasingly ; “at all events, Miss Blantyre,” bowing to Isabelle, “I shall show them

‘A perfect woman, nobly planned.’”

And in one sense she was nobly planned ; well padded, well belted, well busted, and well bandolined, and so made up a very perfect woman in the æsthetical sense of the word.

Poor Bab seemed possessed by some mocking demon, who had got his grip upon her, and would not let her go. She laughed out again :—

“And they’ll hiss and groan at you, Vi, and pelt us all with rotten eggs, as we come to your new kingdom, oh! oh! oh! Excuse me for my rudeness, Miss Dagger, but the thought of Vi driving down his dearies is too much—oh! oh! oh!”

Bab sobered down after another scream or two, and it was decided, whatever we looked like, to Castle Vivian we were to go.

It never once occurred to me that such very advanced beauties as ourselves could want a chaperone visiting at that young man’s house, intimate friend and acquaintance as he was. So we were to go in good style, we were to take it at one long stage, with four horses from the “Jolly Dogs.”

“Youth on the box, and beauty in the coach.”

Vivian said :—

“The change, dear Julia, will do you a world of good; you want shaking about; does she not, Miss Bab? You shall sit in the sunshine under the elms, with your dear books, all day long. You will delight in

the poultry, Miss Bab ; and Miss Blantyre in the peacocks ; and oh, Miss Isabelle, how I shall delight to wander forth with you, for

‘I know a bank where the wild thyme grows,’ where we will sit together and list to the nightingale’s song. Then, hey, for Castle Vivian ! spite of groans and rotten eggs.’

So now, of course, all went contrary. Miss Isabelle wanted me to spend a lot of money on my dress. I wanted her to keep hers in her pocket, but no, she must needs buy a soft coy-like muslin, covered with cowslips, for meandering about the meadows, and a large romantic gipsy hat. I verily believe she would have bought a shepherdess crook, had they been sold in Ravendale.

All this sadly vexed poor Bab, who knew that many a scrap dinner must be the price. She bought nothing ; “she had a new clean twill,” she told me, “that would do for breakfast, her dear old rip for the lanes, and the levantine for dinner, was quite enough for Vi.”

So we were all very happy, no difficulties were raised, except that they would not start on a Friday, being an unlucky day.

Grantley sent his letter down to Mrs. Slowfoot, the housekeeper, containing his orders. She was "delighted at the thought of the ladies; the 'olland should all be off the furniture in a twinkling, and the fly-blown yaller covers taken from the pictur frames, carpets laid down and curtains hung up. Our beds should be aired, and our bells should be answered; but we wasn't to have no baths, not in the least. Gentlemen in general, and ladies in patikler, was mad about baths. She'd lived nigh seventy years, clean and healthy, and her mother before, and never so much as popped their noses in 'em. No, baths of no kind, neither slushes, nor dushes, nor teppits, nor shivers. If the ladies was young, baths was sure to stunt 'em, if they was old, baths made' em limp, and lean, and lanky."

Now, Miss Isabelle had attained a good height, nothing could make me lean, and

Bab was already lanky,—we wanted no baths.

Poor Bab came in one evening, in terrible distress. He was in his easy chair, and passed his hand over its back for her shaking. She was almost as tremulous as the soldier's daughter when their hands met; she had been quite put out, patient as she was.

“It's all up with Castle Vivian, Vi, unless Mrs. Slowfoot is what the *Times* calls a *lady* housekeeper, and can preside.”

“No,” Vi was obliged to own that she was quite a lowly chitterling; nothing could polish her up; her homely exterior could not be stripped off, as the 'olland from the furniture, or the yaller gauze from the pictur frames.

“Izzbull will not visit at a bachelor's house, Vi, without the countenance of some married friend of yours. You know Izzbull is a great fool at best, Vi, and you encourage her with all your philandering and hum.”

“Oh, Miss Bab, don't you preach at me, my kind friend; besides, I've enlisted in

Miss Jocelyn's corps of sinners saved—one methody is enough at a time. But tell Miss Blantyre that I will provide that her feelings shall in every way be considered."

So when he had bundled poor Bab out, he turned to me.

"I will write, Julia, to Captain Ernst and Henry Trafford; they are in the same regiment, and married my cousins, Bell and Bessie Duff. They are stationed at Bristol now."

He wrote. Poor fellow; Miss Bab said "nothing could be more satisfactory — they would be quite sufficient countenance to Izzbull." The united ages of Bell and Bessie falling far short of Miss Blantyre's, made it all so droll.

Well, it was not to be. The husbands wrote.

"Trafford was driving Bell full tilt in a tandem down Park Street, pitched her out, and broke her collar-bone; but he'll come at once, and Bell will follow in a very few days when the doctor calls it safe to travel. Bessie Ernst is just confined of a little girl,

worse luck ; this will be a longer job, but Ernst will come himself. Now surely Miss Blantyre will yield, with the promise of Bell Trafford in a few days ? ”

They met the next morning. Vivian telling Miss Isabelle that he had provided the two married friends required, she bowed and appeared satisfied, saying,—

“ Are they ladylike and religious, and members of the Church of England ? ”

“ Well, I can’t call them ladylike, nor yet religious, but they are members of the Church of England, and they neither drink, smoke, nor swear.”

“ How shocking, Vi, neither drink, smoke, nor swear ? Why mercy, Vi, who on earth ever dreamed that they would.”

“ Why, not shocking at all, Miss Bab, they are men, not women.”

“ I decline it, Mr. Vivian,” said Isabelle.

“ Nay, now ; stop, Miss Blantyre, one of their wives is to follow in three days ; she has just broken her collar-bone, and must stop to get it mended. You must come for all that. I look on Julia as a mother.”

“ But *I* do not, Mr. Vivian.”

I don’t see very well how she could, being a round dozen years a-head of me.

“ I decline it *in toto*, never has a dart been aimed at my fair fame ; I would not visit at a bachelor’s house with no married lady there—not for worlds and worlds ; and if Bebbora entertains it for one moment, all I can say is, I should blush for the name of Blantyre.”

He came into Grove Cottage very much annoyed with her, saying,—

“ Nothing will make that addled old goose give in—she got quite angry with me. Now I ask you, Julia, was it *I* that broke Bell Trafford’s bone ? and is poor Bessie’s little girl any fault of *mine* ? ”

Bab was a sweet temper, and of course gave in ; and sense was swayed by nonsense. Many a time since, and many a time before, Minerva has doffed the helmet of wisdom to bow before Folly with her cap and bells.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN the “Blue Bonnets came over the Border,” in the old raids of the North, it was always said of the Heron Height, “Die when he will, a Dacre dies game.” So I was a Dacre, and I must die game. And as the slanderers would kill my good name, and, as it were, put it to death with this young man, I thought I might still stay the slayers if I did but “die game.”

So we had our Heron Height picnic, and boats upon the river. I took some people who thought themselves serious to the musical festival in three carriages and pair. “Could anything be more handsome? Of course, dear Miss Dacre felt as a mother to

young Vivian, and that was all." I thought Grantley's pious liberality might begin to drift to the ridiculous, if he took the Baptist girls about again ; and as the odious Christy Minstrels were in the town, I engaged the Town Hall a second night. I knew Susannah's soul always warmed to the African, and so I gave the treat to the school children. Miss Susannah considered them men and brothers—blacked men and blacked brothers, they were ; but Niggers they were not, with those slender noses and close lips ; but to have said this would have dissolved the charm, by destroying the sanctimony of the entertainment.

Poor dear Greta ! Before she went to Lansfeldt she helped and abetted all our plans, and spite of her past sorrow, brightened up at the thought of pleasure, as, please God, the young may ever do ! But still, with a gentle sturdiness which formed a prevailing part of her character, she declined sharing it " when Papa was away "—aye, though dear old Bab Blanter went all on her knees to press it, and even the

woman-hater—Vivian—bowed. And now she was gone, and we were left to our own devices; and now for the *fête* at Grove Cottage.

Thermometer, still 80° in the shade, forbade all thoughts of dancing. In this Grantley agreed, for he said, “he wasn’t going to flirt, and if he were, the bagatelle board would serve all such purposes.”

Chess I stood against. I hate to see two wretched creatures (always old enough to know better), sitting at a little table, look across at each other, each vowed to silence, save for those horrid monotones—check, check—king, king—with a face as solemn as a judge drawing on the black cap, and then calling it “a pleasant evening.” Truly, this is as they say of us, taking our pleasure sadly.

Bab Blanter insisted on whist, and Grantley upon music. There was to be a sit-down supper, and of course old Chester’s wines of *anno mundi*.

After we had decided on all this, he turned to me,—

“ Well, Julia, I really think I must be going. I’ve been idle long enough. Moreover, you’ll smile, brave as I am,

‘ I must arm at all points, arm cap-à-pie,
A lady sets her cap at me ! ’

But it quite distresses me to think of the idiot the little chimpanzee is making of herself. Really the chaff at the ‘ Jolly Dogs ’ is something awful. She speaks in parables about her ‘ quite understanding the thrall I am under, and the cruel chain that binds me.’ No end of mystery. I think her mother—for she really, the lunatic, wants a keeper—should be told, that there isn’t a night I stroll round the Honour, but I see her by Glendinning’s gate, and a lot of cads and rowdies making their coarse remarks. I make no bones about it. I put her arm within my own, and take her home at once. No, I must be off; and God ever bless you, Julia, for what you have done for me. You’ll not come, I know, you dear, immovable old stay-at-home; but I’ll be off to the Highlands, and ask Bell and Bessie and their

husbands up for the grouse; and at Christmas, if I come back, like a bad shilling, still you'll take me in?"

"No, Grantley, for this reason. By that time there should be a good wife at Castle Vivian, and she'll take you in."

"I dare say she would, if she could; but a 'burnt child dreads the fire.' Remember, there does not live the woman now who could again 'take me in.' I do not believe their lies; and the only wife I'll ever take is the honest girl who tells me, plump and plain, that she does *not* love me."

Here we were interrupted by little Susan screeching down from the apple-loft,—

"Here, Mr. Grantley, give us holt; it's such a heft, I can't as much as stir it."

Susan had indeed "viewed" a mine, and a silver one, too. It was a huge chest of plate, black with time, with the Dacre heron on it. The child kept clapping her hands:—

"Quick, quick, Mr. Grantley. Oh, ma'am, it's all your'n, all your'n. There's two hurns as 'igh as an 'ouse, candlesticks up to the

ceiling, trays as big as the round table, and butterboats like bew'ful shells, and great big dishes with a pool in 'em. Oh, Mr. Grantley, quick, quick ! Feel the heft. Here, take holt, and bring 'em down. Oh, ma'am, to think it's your'n ! " and she clapped her little hands again.

It was all very massive, and, what I liked best, very, very old ; and to think that all this had been left exposed for fifty years in that unguarded cottage ! And yet there was no marvel in it, for old Guy Decker looked so poor, that a labourer on the roadside has often offered him half his meal ; and his stockings were mended to such a pass, that the rugged darns cut into the fretted feet. And so the lord of thousands lived !

Little did the vain and heartless girl, my namesake, Julia Dacre, dream of the ruin she had made.

So we were amply provided with silver, which Susan said she should shine up till she could see her face in it ; and as Daft Sandy was far from equal to the occasion, Pertun, with a grunt, vouchsafed to lend me

“Thomas,” while Fitz-Flash offered “John” with a smile.

Susan insisted on bringing round the trays, till dull Dorcas sulked, and said “she would be second to none.” I contrived to appease them, by keeping the little girl out of the room, saying she would be so handy in waiting on the ladies in the dressing-room, taking their shawls and tying on their shoes. The little imp told Mrs. Fibber in the morning that “she liked that part a deal the best, she could see them as laced in, and them as didn’t. My, how Miss Blantyre were laced up, to be sure! while old Miss Blanter had never a belt. Some had real lace, and some but sham. Miss Patty stood up in more nor twenty pound, while twenty shilling would have paid for what Miss Mac Weary wore; and Miss Tierça were that untidy, she looked as if she’d come to pieces if you but gave her a shake.”

Little Susan’s own get-up was wonderful. She would wear a cap the shape and size of the one dull Dorcas wore—a great overpowering, flapping thing, making her look

just the little figures of the old days of Punch, with the big heads that told their tale so well.

The tea was to be handed round. Dorcas, unlike most stupid persons, was very good-tempered, and gave in to the little girl's waiting with her. I did not sweeten the tea. The first tray, borne by Dorcas, contained the tea, the cake, and the sugar; the second, borne by Susan, the coffee, cream, and biscuits. On entering, dull Dorcas, to encourage the child, said:—

“Now, Susan, keep close behind. Go by me in all things—do what I do, and say what I say.”

So Dorcas, of course, made way to Mrs. Fitz-Flash with her edibles, saying,—

“Black or green?—plum or plain? No sugar, marm?”

Then Susan with the coffee, following in her lee:—

“Black or green?—plum or plain? No sugar, ma'am?”

She, in her great elevation, was quite unconscious of all but Dorcas and her orders.

Poor child, her big caps and ribbons seemed in a gale, while the little figure herself looked melting away. She never forgot it. Who does?—their first appearance in public.

Mrs. Prime did not come, because she “enjoyed” bad health, nor Mrs. Pertun, because I am quite sure she enjoyed an evening with “Pertun out.” Vesper came, and so did Dr. Ritus. They had tasted old Chester’s Malmsey Madeira once, and, like the tiger that once tastes human flesh, would not rest till they tasted it again.

Pertun gave you the idea of a man of sense, from his rough, knock-you-down way. He used to sneer at your bright sayings, until you thought they were dark ones. He would say “chut, chut” to your investments, till you felt sure they would all go smash tomorrow. If you told him you had got a bargain, he invariably guessed the price at one-third you paid for it. He was always telling me that old Guy had beat down the contract for the Heron Height so low, that the walls were neither wind nor water proof. I did not thank him, but I only hoped if



they did one day tumble down, he might be inside.

Still, at Ravendale, Pertun was called a “man of good, strong, sound, steady sense;” and yet he was not. Only because his looks were grave, and his way hard, they thought his sense was the same.

He sparred with Fitz-Flash most fearfully that evening, of course all siding with him —the man of substance against the man of straw. It seems you can knock everyone down, if you pay your way.

Patty came with “Par,” looking up into her Juan’s “orbs,” then drooping her eyes down to her “chitterling, at the ‘art that contained Mr. Grantley’s ‘air.’” Susan declared to Mrs. Fibber, “It were most bew’ful to hear her sing, with tears in her eyes,—

‘Foller, foller over mountain,
Foller, foller over sea,
And I’ll lead you to Love’s fountain,
If you’ll foller, foller me.’

There were Mr. Grantley a-turning the leaves, and she a-roaring ‘Foller,’ till you’d ‘a thought he’d ‘a got up and foller’d directly.’”

Mrs. Ritus did not come, her admirers saying, “if anything could cast a gloom over Miss Dacre’s pleasant evening, her absence would.” I didn’t think so. She was one of those taciturn, observant people, who are always taking the measure of other folks, and carefully concealing their own. Mrs. Ritus was very contemplative, too ; her eyes were for ever over the blind, a little behind the curtain, whenever I passed to “market, with that young man ;” and when we returned, she was in contemplation still.

Miss Isabelle said she was a “sweet woman, and a perfect Christian ; but—that she required to be known.” I did not require to know her ; though I trust that this may be the first and the last time I ever turn from the pursuit of Christian knowledge.

Poor Tierça was there, in evening dress, rather tidier than usual ; no—

“ You may lace up and deck out the girl as you will,
But the crease of the sloven shall cling round her still.”

Vivian’s martinet glance fell on her, looking

as though he would order her “back to quarters, as not fit for parade.”

There was little difference in the attire of Jane O'Drawl and Ann McWeary; the general effect of their colouring being, that of the first, a brownish grey, that of the second, a brownish blue. They were intensely vacant, idle, and scandalous, and were the first to set on foot the absurd gossip about Grove Cottage; they hated Patty and her “Par,”—Patty, of course, had been very saucy to them. They were poor, and often shabby. They gave, as “Par” said, “neither feeds nor hops.” This might account for the “kicks” they had to take; and they had not, like Colonel Jocelyn, rank’s golden key to open to others the road of social advancement, which, in his presence, procured for Greta much insulting patronage.

Ah! when a girl of eighteen in the hey-day of shelter and prosperity aims her saucy darts at women *passeés*, plain and poor, let her look out; it will be a deadly arrow they’ll shoot back at her, an arrow steeped

in poison, barbed with bitterness ! Spring and summer are short-lived, and while we are in them, we should remember the dreary autumn and bleak winter that to ourselves are coming !

We had not to blush for the name of Blantyre. Miss Isabelle looked superb, as, spite of the draught, she sat at the garden door, back to the sun, and in a good light; she had started feathers, and Fitz-Flash said "it gave such a royalty to her appearance, that he felt more as he used to feel at St. James' that evening at Grove Cottage than he had done for years. Indeed, Miss Blantyre called up his first love, the Duchess of Redderbrae (though, of course, he should not wish this to go further—not—say—to Mrs. Fitz-Flash), so vividly, it was positively painful; but then what man ever does forget his first love?"

"He had not." No; nor that she was Duchess of Redderbrae, and his first cousin, too.

Old Bab would have been far happier with her old rip; however, she gave Susan

and the cream jug a wide berth, and as the sun had gone down, the levantine got no scorching.

Miss Isabelle got out her netting, Fitz-Flash looking off the whist-table to pick up the ball, and saying, "it is," &c. At last Pertun, out of patience, cried,—

"Thomas, you come and stand behind Miss Blantyre, and pick up her ball."

Thomas was not one who dared say "It is where I would ever be," so Miss Isabelle did not let it fall again, though Vivian tried to soothe her, and say something pretty about her having the ball at her feet. Thomas, however, told John that "He wern't a going to play at tisty tosty with an old woman, not for all the masters in the world."

When you dealt to Bab, and she sorted her cards, she seemed to be "taking stock," putting the trump cards to the right of her long nose, the honours with them, while the worthless ones were to the left. We could not vouch for this, as, bad as we were, we did not look into each other's

hands ; we only knew that when the most cards were, when sorted, to the right of her nose, she usually won the game, and so, we concluded, her honours prevailed.

Bab played with Fitz-Flash, I with Par, who was very rude to me ; but I thought, as he was a good player, and I did my best, I might win a third instalment of my rent, besides the "tide" salmon and wax flowers.

But Bab played for her very life ; so Par, spite of what he called his "devil of a memory," lost the game.

Vivian made himself delightful ; his superb figure and charming manner I have already described ; and that face all women loved so well, that ungrateful face now turned from them ! Patty looked as if she would like to take an upward flight, and fling her arms round him, as she chorussed it for the last time, eyes at his orbs, and nose in the air,

"If you follow, follow me."

He brought out all his Indian curiosities and his portfolios, with his figure draw-

ings, “head” studies, &c.,—but not those three sacred, lovely faces, that he had locked away.

Vesper Prime and Dr. Ritus sauntered forth, looking at the card-room as a den of iniquity, and saying they would behold the glories of creation this summer night.

It was a *dry* night too; how I found them out was this. I went out, as it were, to take a domestic survey; I knew that John and Thomas, being loans, would most likely do nothing but sneer and stare, and make fun of everything; and of my three waiters, one was a child, the other dull, and the third daft. I thought I had better give a look at the supper-table, and well I did. Susan, looking at the silver mine as her own discovery, brought out every bit of it. She had ranged all the big salvers at the top of the side-boards, so that each recess looked like the part of an ancient armoury with shields. She had placed the two large silver urns (empty) at each end of the table; she, looking at me in her coaxing way, said,—

“ Let them stay, the hurns was only put for hornament.”

Now the “ loans,” as they say of painters, was each after the manner of his great master. Thomas was very rude, and gruffed out,—

“ This child as ought to have been in bed at eight o’clock, begging your parding, would have it so. Hempty hurns for hornament! he! he! he! she should have asked them as knowed.”

John, after the best style of Fitz-Flash, bowed, with,—

“ I’m sorry ma’am, but ’twas a fancy of the lady’s maid.”

That little flapping-capped dwarf to be taken for the lady’s maid! Susan was enchanted, and told Mrs. Fibber over the wall,—

“ That Mr. John was almost as much a gentleman as our Mr. Grantley, while Thomas was a foul-mouthed old fellow, just like his master. So if you have a chance to say a good word for Mr. John, do ; and I know she give ’em five shillings a-piece,

I heard her count 'em; she shall never
borrer Thomas again."

So Thomas lost a crown!

A little word had done it all. When did
rudeness ever pay? The dwarf never could
forgive the man who cut her shorter.

Then the little creature came up to me.

"Well, ma'am, may I just stand 'em at
the pantry door, where the company can
see 'em as they pass; I want 'em to know
it's all yourn."

I did not think anything special of my
company, still, I did not dream that there
were thieves among them; but we must
live and learn. They certainly did not
pocket the spoons; but not any thieves
among them! I went on my voyage of
discovery. At the pantry door, half in and
half out, stood Thomas and John, and on
the dresser four bottles of Bass, corks out.
John said,—

"It was the 'eat, that the beer did fly
so."

I knew the "loan" was telling lies, so
would not add to his sins by asking another

question; if I had asked who took those corks out, Thomas would have said "John," and John would have said "Thomas."

No thieves, forsooth! Oh, that visit of inspection! Now I knew the wine of *anno mundi* could not fly, however the ale did; passing the dining-room, half in and half out stood Vesper Prime and Dr. Ritus; "they had," they said, "left the card-room as a den of iniquity to take their walks abroad and admire Creation's works." I found them out; they never wandered forth at all; they only left the den to get to the bin of iniquity; I could see by the resplendence of Vesper's face and the glow that was all over Dr. Ritus.

At supper, when poor Grantley poured them out a glass of old Admiral Chester's famous Malmsey Madeira, he was so disappointed that they didn't smack their lips, and appear more delighted than they did; perhaps if I had locked up the dining-room he would have been more satisfied.

Now we were all listening breathlessly to

our master melodist, who, with his own improvised accompaniment was singing,—

“Deck not with gems.”

He had been of us and amongst us until now, now his thoughts were far away, fixed on one in strongest contrast from the mediocre quartette who now surrounded him; every word of his song seemed but made to be addressed to her;—to her, the pure in heart, the choice in form, the soft of voice, the blue-eyed maid at Lansfeldt, over the hills and far away. He had just come to the touching strain,—

“I must have loved thee, hadst thou not been fair.”

He looked up, and there, like the royal Stuart, head and neck above the four Maries, stood Glendinning’s child !

CHAPTER III.

HIS very heart within him seemed paralysed. Had a spirit passed before him ? He had been engrossed with her image throughout that sweetest song ; even I had detected a slight quivering at the line,—

“Oh, formed for liking.”

Had his soul then so yearned towards her, that, as some now teach, the All-Powerful did for the moment bring her up to his mental vision in the body of the flesh, her, whose image was with him in the spirit ? He had heard of such strange impressions on the human mind from those who would not lie ; but he had connected them with the last pant of the dying friend to meet the living one once more. If she,—oh God !

the thought was terrible,—if she, Greta Jocelyn, was passing away ; and her mind filled with such thoughts of him as he read in her face when they parted. It seemed as if his future life would be purposeless, joyless, sunless ! He had had a struggle back to good ; now, better had he ne'er been born !

Had she then passed away from earth ? Had she for ever passed away ? “a thing of beauty is a joy for ever,” but then in this dark world, what is for ever ? Oh God, was Greta gone ? gone from him for ever—had the angels received her, that spirit so pure ?

Such, he told me, were the thoughts that, with the magic of lightning, chased each other through his brain ; however, he recovered in time to conceal his deep emotion from all but myself, who had read his every thought so well, though Miss Isabelle did remark how “much Mr. Vivian feels the heat,” and Bab cried out, “Why don’t you wipe your forehead, Vi ? ”

He only bowed to Greta, and walked to the open window, with Patty “in his lee.”

I now had time to look at Greta. Since then, I have seen a painfully touching sketch of the Well at Cawnpore, and there stands a blooming English girl rushing on her brother's sword to avoid, oh, horror! the fearful doom that awaited her from the threatening brute, scowling in hellish blackness above her. Far more welcome than his loathsome touch, was instant death upon the hero's sword.

So looked Greta at Vivian now, in anguish unutterable; defiance, undaunted. He did well not to speak to her, and to avoid a scene.

And, so little do the thoughtless guess at life's deep game that is going on around them, all put down this awkwardness to the pride and distance a man of Vivian's rank ought to show to Jocelyn's daughter.

I was not surprised to hear him go out into the counting-house and ask Susan for some brandy.

"Not if I knows it, Mr. Grantley, for Missus give me strict orders I was to give none o' the men nothing to drink."

She also told Mrs. Fibber, "She couldn't tell what had come to him to think he could be that larky with Miss Patty at supper after being so mortal pale and bad; however, he done without the brandy—I keeps the sperits."

"Lor, Susan, such a young child as you to keep the sperits?" she said.

"Iss, indeed." Telling a very wicked lie, as many a young child does.

At last Conrad returned, and little Patty went up with a loud sigh,—

"In Conrad's absence, wouldest thou have me glad!"

Old Bab bawled out, "Greta, child, how is the old lord? Hearts are trumps, Baldwin Fitz-Flash."

Greta came to me.

"I am in time, dear Julia; I will tell all to-morrow. Thank God, I am in time." And her eyes, filled with tears, glanced across at Patty.

Patty did not heed the tears in the blue "orbs," for her own "orbs" were glancing upturned beams into Juan's black ones.

Patty was clearly making a great fool of herself, and Jane O'Drawl and Ann McWeary were exchanging orbs with irrepressible, though silent, triumph.

Juan studiously avoided Greta. Then Miss Blantyre had to be led to the piano, and after much pressing, sung,

“I’m over young to marry yet.”

Then Jane O'Drawl and Ann McWeary, after no pressing at all, duetted,—

“We are the wandering breezes, eezees-eezees.”

The last breeze shook as high as G, and if the room at old Guy’s had not been so low, and your eyes were closed, you would fancy ’twas a windy night at the top of the Honour, and the rooks cawing in the elms. It was always left to the last, this duet, that we might escape if we could; or else it was a welcome sound, as the hour is the darkest that is nearest the dawn. It was just before supper, and a good time was coming; now there was a sadness in “God Save the Queen,” for then our joys were over.

Dr. Ritus with much ceremony handed me in. Of course, then we had first to provide escorts for the married ladies, who certainly want them the least. So "Par" strutted up to Mrs. McWeary, and Prime crawled and scraped up to Mrs. O'Drawl. Vivian was to do the honours to Mrs. Fitz-Flash, who being the widow of the Honourable Gaunt Forester, was still the honourable, though the wife of that shady scamp, Fitz-Flash. Fitz-Flash, in the *embarras des richesses*, had to choose between the Misses Blantyres; he knew that it was as much as his life was worth, to take Izzbull for the oldest, so, gave his arm to Bab; she shook him off, saying, "She had need of no man's arm." Then Fitz-Flash took Miss Isabelle, softly telling her how much she reminded him of the dear old times, for he could fancy he was again at St. James' with the Duchess of Redderbrae.

I was a Dacre, and must die game; so of course that young man sat opposite to me, Mrs. Fitz-Flash on the right side, Patty sidling close up to the other, and Greta wedged in

close beside her. Miss Blantyre gave her a condescending bow. Bab cried out,—

“ Why, Greta, child, what is the matter ? Mustn’t mope about the old lord. When we are over eighty, we ought all to be glad to go and settle our last accounts.”

I tried hard not to look at Fitz-Flash. Though we were neither of us but six-and-forty, yet I should have been delighted to have settled our last accounts.

“ Vi, say something to cheer her.”

“ Dear Miss Bab,” said the trembling girl, “ don’t call attention to me.”

Vivian, as we often do, when really agitated and annoyed, tried to make light of it all, and talked all manner of nonsense to Patty, she sipping his champagne ; then he, going to Patty’s glass, and sipping her’s again. Then he helped her to the wing of the chicken, he saying “ he would have the merry-thought, because it had been under her wing.”

Par contradicted everybody between every gasping mouthful that he took. However, he had not been thieving, and so smacked

his lips honestly at the first taste of the Malmsey Madeira, and so pleased Vi. However, Dr. Ritus grew quite eloquent when he was allowed to speak. He began with the soft Anglican look and tone "from under" to advocate the celibacy of the clergy, quite forgetting Mrs. Ritus. Vivian, in a joke, cried up the table,—

"And so do I, Dr. Ritus. Celibacy for the black coats, leave the ladies for the red ones. You know 'none but the brave deserve the fair.'"

Then he hob-nobbed, German fashion, with the adoring Gulnare, the "wandering breezes" swaying with delight at the goose she was making of herself. And now, once again, came the look of anguish and horror over Greta, and Bab called out:—

"You are a rackety lot down there, Vi. Give my poor Greta a glass of wine; she wants it more than any of you. My dear child, do drop moping about the old lord. I never wasted a tear on any man, dead or alive. Yes, once, on my poor father; but never on a live one. Vi, fill her glass."

Mechanically, the glass was held out to him, as mechanically he filled it. His thoughts were "oh, how sad and beautiful!" hers were "oh, how sad and vile."

Susan's remark to Mrs. Fibber was, that "Really, missus ought not to be bringing forward that Greta Jocelyn with the really gentry folks like our Mr. Grantley. Iss, indeed, the pride on him! How he just did toss the wine into her glass, when Bab Blanter told him to help her. I must say this for Greta, she knew her place, and was quite cowed like. She didn't ought to be there, Mrs. Fibber, and I a-waiting on her, and her mother no better nor mother."

"No more she didn't, Susan; she didn't ought."

"And when I went and told Dorcas, what does she do but keeps saying, 'Be civil, Susan; ' and then hums out,—

'Bide ye yet, and bide ye yet,
Ye little ken what will betide her yet.'"

"But Dorcas always were dull, Susan."

"Iss, indeed, she were; iss, indeed."

Tierça was very attentive to Dr. Ritus.

“ Father, let me give you some apple tart.”

“ Thanks, daughter ; and a leetle, just a very lee-tle, of the custard.”

“ Father, will you try the salad ? ”

“ Thanks, daughter, no. I’ll try cowcumber, with a leetle, a very lee-tle of the dressing.”

Bab would have none of this.

“ Come, come, Tierça, none of that. Vesper Prime and no other man is your father. You are not at Rome, so don’t do as the Romans do.”

Par, who, coarse and unfeeling as he was, was said to have led a good life, often insulted Colonel Jocelyn, who did not. But now the old lord was dying, and the new lord was coming to his kingdom. Greta Jocelyn was an object of great attention to-night. The girl looked exquisitely nice. How she could have come all the way from Warminster, in that dusty Tally-ho, and look the “fairy bride” that she did, goodness only knows. So Par bawled out,—

“ Greta, can you tell me why some people

look as if they always came out of a band-box ; and Tierça, can you say why some always look as if they came out of a bag ? ”

Vesper Prime had no coronet to come to, like the future lord, and Par knew that. All Bells were at their very last chime, if a very round sum were not collected in a month. Now, whoever gave a round sum, Par could always give a rounder, so Vesper Prime, though braver after his visit to the bin of iniquity than he had ever been in his life, dared not throw a lance for his child.

Now we all passed out through old Guy’s narrow passage, single file, as we passed in. If it had not been for so many turn-up noses amongst us, we might have suggested the Greeks at the Straits of Thermopylæ.

Par made a great virtue of seeing Dr. Ritus safe home, determining to go and tell of him everywhere next morning.

Medora laid violent hands on Conrad, and then I saw Greta walk round to the other side, and put Patty’s arm in her arm.

I could not make it all out. Greta fairly puzzled me ; but I knew Grantley was with

her, and would take care of her to the Honour; and really “dying game,” as I had done, that hot summer’s night, was no trifling toil. I locked all up, and then fell asleep.

And the inscrutable trio reached the High Street, Grantley thinking Greta very peremptory in the way she pushed Patty in. She observed that though the chain was up, the door was unfastened. Old Ann Sawle answered it, saying her master had not yet returned.

Greta said good-night to Patty, and turned to Vivian.

“Do not go one step farther with me, Mr. Vivian. I have God above me, and the moonlight night all round; it seems as though it brought with it a terror, the very presence of sin. Oh, leave me, to think in my boastful human pride, I dreamed that I could save you. I look not for honour or truth in the false, ungrateful friend, any more than from the base betrayer of a silly, but not sinful, girl. One word only—there is, I believe, even in the profligate’s creed,

one pure line ; you may pervert, betray, nay, kill a woman, and the world will receive you still ; but if you break your word to a man, though you may not injure him one feather's weight, the same just, impartial world will receive you no longer. Be it so, forget for one moment that I am other than a brother soldier—swear to me as you would swear to your dear friend, Mark Bannerman, that you will not lure that wretched girl from her father's house to-night."

"I swear," he said, more astounded than ever. "But Greta, Miss Jocelyn, hear me."

She had sprung from him, leaving but the birds of the air to hear him, as he called to her in vain. In our hilly countries, you are soon out of sight—so far away, and yet so near.

Everley Honour was pitched on a sudden height past Ivy Lane, just out of the town. The girl mounted it in a trice, and Vivian strolled by the river to the silver beech at Glendinning's Gate.

As you looked from the Honour, the town of Ravendale had quite a panoramic effect,

so that as Greta turned from the front step, she could distinctly see furtively running down the steps the same muffled little figure they had taken home. So now she ran down another slope, and took her stand by the beech tree. She was of course by no means surprised to see Vivian pacing to and fro.

On came Patty, springing upon Juan.

“Nothing but death shall part us now. Oh, Conrad, Conrad, nothing but this exquisite hour could have kept me alive through weeks and weeks of anguish and agony.”

He was more dazed than ever.

“Oh, I understand it all, my heart’s darling. You have been under the thrall, as you call it, of that nauseous old harridan, Miss Dacre. Oh, you could not come before —don’t explain, but kiss me. Now you are mine, and mine only, and am I not fondly thine own? Now let us next think of the railway. I’ve brought some money; Par mustn’t know. How lucky it was he took Dr. Ritus home, and they have gone the

wrong way round the town; remember, if Par catches me he'll kill me."

Not he—he hadn't the pluck to play Virginius. Ravendale was not Rome; and he knew he should be hung for murder if he killed his daughter. Still there was a general impression, too, that he was a son of violence, and this prevented even the friendly hinting at this folly, the informant dreading that he might kill him before he killed his daughter.

Here, stedfast and unflinching, Greta came up.

"Patty, dear Patty, you will go to your destruction if you follow this false bad man to-night. You will come down to die upon the roadside; and betrayed, deceived, deserted, hate cannot wish you worse than your own guilt and shame will make you. Oh, what are sin's wages? Who should know, and not I? Think of Loraine's—Glendinning's death! And what drove them to despair? Sin! And the sinner? My own erring mother! And has not the Lord visited her for these things? Has not the

world's cruel scorn almost crushed not only her, but hers? And yet Colonel Jocelyn did love her. There is this one wide difference, that Colonel Jocelyn *did* love her, and Mr. Vivian does *not* love you."

"Not love me, Greta? Go away, you nasty spiteful thing. My Juan tells me he would lay down his life for me; that I am his queen, his rose, his star; get away, you nasty thing; you ought not to be about so late; you have read his last letter, and then to have the face to say, 'Lara does not love his Kaled!'" Then she crept up all the closer to him.

"Well Patty, Mr. Vivian has passed his word to me that you shall not leave Rendale to night."

"What a shame! I thought to be at Boulogne-sur-Mer to-morrow morning," and she shook with rage. "This comes of Par's taking up people."

Now Par was always taking people down. Greta looked up, as though she trusted him,—

"You have passed your word, Mr. Vivian;

you would not break it with Mark Bannerman ; keep a soldier's faith with me. There is a household, and consequently there would be talking if I took the poor girl to the Honour, and Julia's young servants would gossip too ; so take her to the 'Jolly Dogs,' call up Mrs. Hopkins as quietly as you can, tell her to wake nobody for her life, leave Patty in her charge for to-night ; she will aid and abet nothing that is wrong, and she can keep a secret ; then she will pass the silly misled girl, when that bad old woman, Ann Sawle, who let her out, comes to her morning work, safely into her father's ; and if it please God I live till morning, you shall be denounced, her father shall know it ; if, after that, she rushes on her doom, yours is the guilt though hers is the shame."

Patty cried up :—

"Then to-morrow morning, Juan dearest, we'll start to-morrow before the break of day. Catch me going back with old Ann Sawle, it's that nasty cruel Greta, she wants Par to kill me, she does, she does ! "

Then she charged up at him ; but his lips were out of reach, and his orbs were turned away. He was mercifully spared, and looked like a huge steamer the lesser breakers cannot lash. He tried once more to address Greta, but she was half way up the Honour, and the poor girl had never before been in such a plight ; it was morning twilight, and nearly sunrise now, she called up to the nursery window,—

“ Don’t be frightened, Nursey dear, it is only I, Miss Jocelyn ; nothing is the matter. I came up unexpectedly from Lansfeldt, stayed late at Miss Dacre’s, Mr. Vivian came with me through the park, but I have sent him back.”

That it was very late Nurse Denny knew, but even she never dreamed of how late it was ! Greta went to her bedroom window, and there they were ; he had kept his word. Yes, it was his, that tall dark figure ; hers, that small and tripping one ; this one night was gained. Oh, would the Lord hear her prayer, and yet save them both !

Like a pettish sullen child, Patty let him

pull her into the “Jolly Dogs;” he took her first into the tap-room, took off his own high-heeled Wellingtons, and knowing well the sharp click of her Balmorals, made her take off her boots as well. He said,—

“There is no need to strike a light, it is nearly morning now; there, keep quiet for your life, and nobody will find you out.”

“But I don’t care about being found out, I am not a bit ashamed. I glory in my love; and Juan, don’t you?”

There was a love he gloried in, but it was not his love for her.

“My poor child, you are under a strange delusion, but there is no time for talking now.”

“What! you don’t mean to say that when I was willing to cross the wide, wide world with you,—ready, aye ready, to lay down my life without a moment’s pause for you; to sit by your dear side, clasping your dear hand, and gazing at your wondrous eyes the summer day through,—do you mean to say that, while I have lived through all

my killing agony, you never even loved me, and those letters full of devoted raving love? How could you, you perjured villain, dare to treat me so?"

"I never wrote a line to you in my life. You are the victim of some cruel trick to bring you to open shame; be but quiet and cautious, and you'll defeat it yet; here, follow me upstairs; tread lightly for your life; go in to No. 4, that's my room, take these dusty boots in with you; in five minutes time, not before, fling them out with a bang, then draw the bolt with a sharp shot, as I always do, and don't cough—I never do; there now, 'good night,' I'll find Mrs. Hopkins, and she'll take good care of you," and he closed the door upon her.

He knocked at the landlord's door.

"I really am ashamed, Mrs. Hopkins, to rout you up."

"Shall I do as well, sir? The missus have had a touch of the tic and is just gone off sound," said Hopkins, in a full red cap and big black tassel, looking forth into the night.

"I'm ashamed, my good fellow, to disturb her, but only she can make me my peppermint draught. I think it must be the ale at Miss Dacre's that has 'upset me.'"

"Not a doubt about it, sir; that's it, not a doubt about it. Why 'ool Miss Dacre send to the 'Royal George,' where the liquor's always doctored, and not to the 'Jolly Dogs' where all is genuine? I'll call up the missus, none but she can cure you if you've been drinking the pisined stuff from the 'Royal George.' Call that Bass? God forgive 'em!"

The kind old woman came out directly; he smiled and said,—

"I really am quite on my beam ends, Mrs. Hopkins, never was so run to earth before, or I should never thus have disturbed you; fact is, I've got this silly little Miss Patty in my room close here, and there she must stay to-night because nobody will go in there. Some she-devils have stuffed the little goose up, and she thought I wanted to run away with her to-night. I strolled,

though it was so late, round by the river, and there she run up to me full tilt."

Somehow he did not like that Greta should be mixed up in this blundering business, so continued, quoting her words as his own.

"There was a household, I thought, at the Honour, and of course would be chattering, and at Miss Dacre's Susan and Dorcas are gossips, you know. She says her father would kill her if he met her with me. I did not know what to do with her, and so I brought her to you. The first thing in the morning slip her in at the garden gate, when old Ann Sawle goes to her work; never mind me; for God's sake take care of the girl and keep her out of sight. I'll turn into the tap-room and sleep with the spirits."

So, instead of being off to

"The land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in her clime,"

it was ordained that poor little Kaled should follow her Lara no farther than the "Jolly Dogs."

C H A P T E R I V.

VIVIAN'S one first thought was of the childish silly thing who had been so near perdition. He had laughed, and who could help it? but he began to pity her now. Men forgive much more to folly than they ever do to boldness, and she had been more sinned against than sinning. However, he had taken every precaution, and he could do no more.

It began to glimmer to him now, Greta's farewell at the Tally-ho. It explained the look of "sinner, sinner, sinner," those eyes seemed always saying. The signature that she had showed him was no doubt one to these vile letters that had worked Patty such woe. He had had so much to do for me, that his signatures were everywhere.

His writing, too, was so peculiar you would think it never could be feigned, and that was the very reason it was so easily imitated, as the best portraits are usually those of the strongly-marked and ill-favoured faces, whose points tell out from their very ugliness,—as Cromwell with his warts, and “Liberty” Wilkes with his atrocious squint. He had sworn to his writing with his own lips; how then was Miss Jocelyn to doubt it? She had parted then in horror from him, and her last glance had haunted him ever since; and last night, when he had thought a spirit passed before him, that haunting look was there. No, the spirits around him had not half the fire in them as the spirit within. A spirit that he could not lay, still softly sounding in his ear, was the earnest silvery voice pressing him to keep his word, and save the bold, impulsive girl who would not save herself. Then that sweet beauty that he coveted could only be his by a *ruse*; ever since I and Dorcas smelt that rat, his he determined it should be. It was no trifling emotion that made

him tear up my cards in shoals, when she said,—

“I would never take a love that I never could return, but I would give—what would I not?—for the honest right to a gentleman’s name.”

That name he determined should be his own, and woman-hater as she knew him to be, he felt that he need not offer her his love when he offered her his name. She had gone off to Lansfeldt very suddenly at last. A rebuff he did not dread; this would have been an anti-charm in the chase of any other woman, but this love-chase was unlike all others; there could be no wooing where her bargain specially left out love, and his disbelief in woman put a seal upon it. Though her bright beauty was of this world, her pure chastened spirit was of a better. There is a deal of affected talking about dualities of all sorts, but there was a great duality about this poor girl. As she had two names, so had she two natures; she was as she was called, Jocelyn’s daughter, and she was Glendinning’s child. She had the Colonel’s

high-bred, frank and kindly way, the mingled freedom and deference of most of the nobly born; she had her forester mother's simple phrases, and her unpretending rustic ways; and then, as though it were in the very race, from the father she could recall but once, bathed in blood at his dreadful death, she had inherited the dreamy forebodings, the superstitious tendencies, as well as the strong, plodding, steadfast pursuit of the object in hand, which doubtless characterized Andrew Glendinning, a native of Perth.

Vivian dreaded no repulse. Poor Colonel Jocelyn's matchmaking had been the laugh of the country-side, in the gay young days of Greta and Loraine. This girl he always called his favourite child, and knowing well how bitterly she felt the "sham" of her life, he longed to see her happily placed. He might sing

"I've set her off to get her off, till fallen off I've
thought her,
For still she hangs upon my arm, she is my eldest
daughter."

Then he laughingly conjured up the mother's joy, gently curtseying with tears in her eyes,—

“Thank you, Mr. Vivian, sir ; oh, be good to my Greta !”

Yes, there was what affected folks would call a duality or contrast about her. Venus fighting with the “Methody,” Allegra with Penserosa, and they were daily more triumphant as the dark shadow of Loraine was paling away. He honoured her grave thoughtfulness as well as her humble piety, but it was not in the heart of man not to like her as Love and Joy the best.

And now the sun was up, and peeping out from the tap-room window, he saw the poor trembling little culprit safely passed into the garden by old Ann Sawle. He then sprang lightly up to his room, made a great make-believe of a litter, and came down for an early breakfast ; he and Mrs. Hopkins thinking it a great triumph that they should thus have been able

“To cheat surprise
And prying eyes.”

Thinking perhaps I might be a little tired, he did not call in at Grove Cottage, but passed on to the Honour. Early as it was, Greta was already on her way to the High Street, tears streaming from her eyes, with a wearied, hurried step. They met at the foot of the hill, the girl likening him to the green bay-tree that is always flourishing. To her jaundiced mind he looked like a conquering demon, so full of joy his face, so full of life his strong, light step; and his cheery voice said to her,—

“ All right, Miss Jocelyn; though heaven knows what I should have done but for your mother wit. I must have blurted her in at Julia’s, then Susan would have chattered at Mrs. Fibber’s, Dorcas would have told it the milkman, and Daft Sandy would have spread it right and left as he went to the ‘Wrestlers’ for the beer. I took poor Patty up at once to Mrs. Hopkins, who quietly passed her through the garden-door this morning with old Ann Sawle. She went up to her bedroom, Sawle says, and cried herself to sleep. I dare say she’ll be up

before her Par, after his long round last night.”

Here he smiled, while tears she could not stifle broke in wild grief from her. Still she went forward, with a quiet dauntlessness nothing could turn.

“Miss Jocelyn, you shall not go into the town in all this distress. Take a turn by the side of the river, and calm yourself.”

“Leave me, Mr. Vivian. Can you think I am so blind as not to see through all this playing with me, that Patty may gain time? No. I go on to the High Street, and nothing shall stop me.”

“A stronger arm than yours shall stop you. Come with me to the river-side.”

“Have I not implored, nay commanded you to leave me? There is guilt in your tone—there is taint in your touch. I shall first warn the blinded father against the base betrayer of his child, and Julia shall know how brutal, coarse, and thankless is the man she calls her friend.”

“Pitch into me, Miss Jocelyn, hard as you like; I am proof, mentally and bodily. I

was a Merchant Taylor boy under old Smart, the thrashing-master; need I say that my hide is very hard?"

"Leave me, I say!"

She now seemed scarcely able to stand.

"There is neither guilt in my tone nor taint in my touch; but go into the High Street alone you shall not."

It was in vain for her to resist him. She felt that she must fall, and wanted to press forward, and so, as she thought, perform her mission.

So the saint took the arm of the sinner, and the just went the way of the wicked, as, with a light step, he went on, flourishing like a green bay-tree. Patty saw them coming, and sprang out to the door-step.

"Oh, Greta, now, isn't it a shame I can't elope? I've got no lover; and he never wrote those lovely love-letters, so full of heart and feeling. Oh, I shall die! Now don't contradict me; I shall die of a broken heart and unrequited love. Isn't it a cruel shame?"

“ He never wrote those letters ! Oh, God forgive me, I never can forgive myself ! ”

The uncharitable Dinah sunk exhausted on the sofa, tears falling fast as rain.

Patty was so full of her unutterable woe, she heeded nothing round her ; but Vivian rose, and filled a glass of water from the carafe, taking her hand with a look of gentle pardon, that still added to her distress.

“ You may well weep for me, Greta. You’ve a good heart, though you are ever so much too pious. Perhaps I shall go out of my senses, perhaps I shall drown myself, like Loraine. There, you see, St. Salvey was her first love, and she never got over her first love ; and you never have, Greta —don’t pretend—you never have forgot De Grey.

“ Ah, but then, dear Patty, poor Vere and I did love each other, and that is why I never could forget my first love.”

“ Well, and it’s a great shame, my Juan, my Conrad, my Apollo ought to have loved me.”

Then Vivian said soothingly,—

“And so he would, Miss Patty, if he had had better taste.”

She burst into tears.

“There, don’t talk to me, don’t: I know I must die. I’d as lief Par got in a passion, and killed me at once.”

“Was all right, Miss Patty, last night?”

“Oh, goodness, yes! I flung the boots out with a bang, drew the bolt with a shot, and never so much as sneezed, much less coughed. I am sure I shall go mad. Well, I won’t, Greta, if it makes you cry so. It was the ‘wandering breezes’ must have done it to spite me. There now, Greta, don’t cry so. I may not drown myself after all.”

“Yes, it was the ‘wandering breezes.’ Now mind, Miss Patty, and keep a silent tongue, and none will be the wiser.”

“And wasn’t it a bit of luck Par went the wrong way round the town? That was the Malmsey Madeira.”

Greta and Vivian then walked back together to the Honour; and when they got

inside the grounds, she lifted up her veil, and bowing humbly, said,—

“Mr. Vivian, forgive me ! I never can forgive myself the spiritual pride that set me up as a teacher of righteousness to you. And then that I should, without charity or justice, condemn a man unheard. Oh, to think that I have been but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.”

“Ah, Miss Jocelyn, sinners are not so sour as saints. *We* do forgive, and you sour Methodys do not. But, you remember, the brass was sounded to save one who little deserved it, and the cymbal was tinkled to warn her from destruction. Now, good-bye ! You shall not come down to Grove Cottage to-night ; Julia and I will walk up to the Honour.”

He came in and gave me the foolish letter which had brought poor Greta post haste from Lansfeldt. It was much in the coarse, inflated style of the previous composition. After terrible abuse of that “obese and nauseous hag, Miss Dacre, who would never let him out of her sight,” it arranged their

flight together, after supper at Grove Cottage.

It was from "Lara to Kaled" this time; and I have shown how "all too willing" Kaled was to follow him. The flattery was preposterous. She was "dearer far to him than Beatrice to Dante, Leonora to Tasso, or Laura to Petrarch!"

If they could not manage the flight from the High Street, then she was to come (as she did) to the river-side. In short, everything was done to shame, blast, and mortify the saucy girl.

Her letters were regularly placed in the trunk of the silver beech, when she went to take his from there, Jane O'Drawl and her accomplice fetching them; and John, who could best imitate Vivian's writing, copying the answers; and his constant non-fulfilment of his vows was put down to my ogress-like watch and jealousy. The stroll round the Honour was a favourite one of his, and that helped her delusion, for he did meet her constantly. In fact, they had a silly little goose to cram, and they crammed

her, as old Bab Blanter gracefully remarked, crop full.

Vivian's writing, as I have said, had been flung about broadcast. John O'Drawl had an appointment in the office of the man who repaired the bridge, and we always fixed the forging upon him, the "wandering breezes" supplying him with the wherewithal. Against Vivian they could have no spite. He was so truly high bred, that he had never made them feel, either by slight or sneer, that they were plain and *passées*. Indeed, such a *faux pas* in a soldier's career did but appear to them as one medal or clasp of honour the more; for even when poor Miss Bailey hanged herself, the song does not give us to understand that it in any way damaged the repute of

"The captain bold in Halifax,
Who dwelt in country quarters."

Now Patty, in her triumph, posted this last letter off to Lansfeldt. Greta was with her mother when it came, and neither would rest until they did their best to stop the headstrong girl, whom they had both heard

Vivian quiz and laugh at many a time. They could not but think badly of him, and they did. Mrs. Jocelyn, in her cruel self-abasement, saying :—

“ I dare say Mr. Vivian is a bad man, He was, if you remember, so good and kind to me. Go up at once, my Greta ; save her now, to-morrow it will be too late to save her.”

Greta came, and stood like a vision before him just as Vivian concluded his song. We all agreed that if silence is golden in the affairs of others, it is much more so in our own. Now Vivian was a young man and a soldier, one to whom much licence would be given. Still, it was a fresh starting-point in his life. He was about to take possession of a high station and a goodly heritage, and he wisely shrunk from the publicity of even this paltry scandal. There must be the hauling up of John O'Drawl, the exposure of the “wandering breezes.” Still more golden was silence in regard to the girl, already too notorious ; for her father, though no Roman, would have

led her a dog's life. I must say this for the conspirators, they were wonderfully coached up in Byron, and, as poor Patty said, "made love so beautifully!" I should think they did. One stanza told her she was

"More sweet than Medora, than Haidée more fair,
More fond than Zuleika, more kind than Gulnare."

Yes, the "breezes" must have wandered far in the guileful mazes of the poet lord.

Patty had, indeed, to thank the two kind young heads who thus did their best to save her. And Mrs. Hopkins never betrayed her, not even when Polly called out,—

"Lor, mother, there must have been dancing at Grove Cottage. What a scent of patchouli; in Mr. Vivian's dress-coat, is it? No; it's all about the room (poor little Kaled!). How strange to dance, and Guy scarce cold, eh, mother? It comes from the ladies."

"Well, never say a word, Polly. Miss Dacre's a far better landlady than Guy ever was."

"I know that Guy was no lady at all; but

—why, mother, here's a beautiful pocket-handkerchief marked with two lovely P's in the corner!"

"Yes, Polly; that came in mistake from the wash. One of Mr. Vivian's is gone to the Pertuns. There, girl, you go now. I'll finish here."

Poor Mrs. Hopkins! Her knees knocked together, and big drops dewed her brow, just as if she were mopping up after a murder. I have since thought that all this outward evidence of distress showed the mortal conflict that was going on within her, when as a woman she triumphed, and for once kept a secret.

Thus, save the patchouli and the mouchoir, Patty left not a wreck behind.

Of course the apparent flirtation was at an end, and Miss Isabelle, who quite revelled in crossed loves and broken hearts, fraternized considerably with the "forsaken;" indeed, their tears flowed together; Isabelle owning that she herself at one time "had not been indifferent to Mr. Vivian, though she had slightly the advantage of him,"—she had,

two and thirty years. And so they talked for days and days, "and never either found another" such a patient listener. It was a romantic pickle they were in, Patty for the first, Miss Isabelle for the twenty-first time, to be "left lamenting;" still, there was this electric spark between them, they both had loved Don Juan !

Patty did not die ; no,—

"She wept and tore her hair,
And then she married another,
As many have done before."

She married Dr. Jasper Jarvis Jebb, the "only man Par ever met that could talk him down," and so Par respected him accordingly. Great on all subjects Jasper was, but he was greatest on what his soul loved best,— convulsions, contusions, and compound and vulgar fractures. He always introduced himself with "I'm a plain man, sir," (he was), "my name is Jasper Jarvis Jebb" (he never could have been taken for Conrad or Lara); his orbs were green, round and piercing, his hair stood on end, and his

ears stood out ; height five foot one, girth fifty-four inches. Such was Dr. Jasper Jarvis Jebb !

Poor Patty ! instead of Medora he called her " Martha." And is not this an epitome of life's many other disenchantments ? Still for all that " Patty's dream " did not end either in " madness or in misery ; " there is a deal of comfort and respectability in the Ravendale Doctor, though she still declares there is no love like the first, while Miss Isabelle held, that there is no love like the last, thinking possibly of Elizabeth and Essex.

Well, thank God, no real harm did come to her, but a girl should beware of making enemies. " Tread on a worm, and it will turn."

She may be standing on the cliff above the whirlpool of destruction, and no faithful young " Methody " be there to pull her back ; and if she falls, it will never be into the arms of such a Don Juan !

C H A P T E R V.

WE walked up in the evening together to the Honour, and found poor Greta looking very fagged and sorrowful, giving her little sisters their tea. Sarley and Sootie jumped up into Grantley's arms, and the two elder children put their little hands in mine, and so dragged us into the house. Greta had quite her mother's look of bitter self-abasement, as she raised her eyes to Vivian ; while he, though he had the grand seigneur air of a "Pardoner" upon him, looked as if she were again to play the Peri, and he were as in his picture, to stand for the gate of Heaven, there could not be a doubt but that he would be too blest

"To let the pardoned in."

Now something told me that the sooner I

was off daisy-picking with Sootie and Sarly the better ; in her plaintive voice, she said—

“ I feel unworthy, Mr. Vivian, even to take your kind hand in mine, after the cruel wrong that I have done you. What I feel it hardest to forgive myself is, for one moment suspecting that you could be guilty of such coarse treachery, such utter seemingness to a friend like Julia ; and, indeed, there was no reason why I should be so rude as to doubt your love for Patty.”

“ Yes, there was a reason,” he eagerly said.

She did *not* see the fond devotion to herself that gleamed down from his soul-telling eye, and she *did* hear the falter of his truthful voice.

“ Yes, there was a reason ; because I loved another.”

Of course she misunderstood him, as she had often done before. He meant Greta Jocelyn, she meant Marion Lisle. Now all too late. The girl looked up.

“ Because you loved another. Oh, Mr. Vivian, it is a love you should have fought with, turned from, and subdued ! ”

“I did fight with it: I did turn from it, but I could not subdue it.”

“She is doubtless very beautiful?”

“Beautiful to distraction.”

“And you love her still, although it is a crime?”

“I love her still, and I don’t call it a crime.”

“Ah, there we differ; but to-day of all others is the last I should dare to preach to you my own utter lack of the greatest of Christian virtues, ‘charity,’ that makes me feel myself a castaway.”

Here the tears welled up, and the sweet lips quivered with emotion, but she could not speak. He took up her words.

“Miss Jocelyn, best and purest. How should you call yourself a castaway? Now, I, in all honesty, own that I should have been a castaway but for dear Julia’s kindness. Oh, help me to forget my past, cruelly wronged though I had been; still, I can make no excuse for my dark days of nothingness in India. Pray God, I may yet not be a castaway, though a far way off from the

pure and good. Miss Jocelyn, did I not once hear you say how much you would give for the honest right to bear a gentleman's name? Who would not ask you for your love? Who would not offer you his own? I ask you now, before I start for Castle Vivian. Will you take its owner's name? Yes, Margaret Glendinning, for in your own name I must wed you, such a wife would be my bond with my God; would stand as the shield of Heaven, between earth and hell, and in your own name I will woo you; Margaret Glendinning—will you be that shield to me?"

"You do not ask me for my love; you do not offer me your own; you have said that woman's lips are made for lying, and her tongue for speaking guile; you pay me the high compliment of thinking me one who would hold a man too good. Well, we both can do our duty and find happiness in that. I cannot bear the thoughts of Lansfeldt. Our bargain is struck. No other woman on God's earth, Mr. Vivian, could feel as I shall feel the comfort of your assured position

and good old name. I will come to Castle Vivian ; I will be that shield to you.”

He drew her fondly to him.

“ Yes, you shall come to me, my own stricken deer ; and may I perish in darkest torments, if ever you should find a touch or tone not tender, a thought or deed untrue ! ”

Her tears were in her eyes again to think how that very morning she had misjudged this man. He continued,—

“ This strong arm shall fight your battles, love ! Coarse men shall never shock you more, nor cruel women scorn ; for none dare call your name a lie when it is Margaret Vivian.”

“ Still,” she said, ‘ Methody ’ and ‘ Pense-rosa ’ prevailing now, “ there is the vow at the altar, the vow before our God that commands you to endow and worship me—I, to love, honour, and obey you ! Shall I not sin against my God if I take—yet break—that solemn vow ? ” She sighed sadly.

Then he resumed his railing, mocking, bitter tone.

“ Oh, you can break a vow !—all women

do ; their love is all a lie. When was a good man honoured ? and none but bullies are obeyed."

" And such a one you think me, and yet to such a one you bind yourself, and call her a link with Heaven. No lie shall ever cross my lips, and yet I can take the vow to love you, for my life should be spent for your wellbeing ; and in making your name honoured, I do my part in honouring you, and so fulfil my second vow. And for my third, you are not a bully, yet you shall be obeyed. Now for your vows : to be 'endowed' with all the worldly goods of Castle Vivian would satisfy a far more greedy soul than mine, and as to the 'worship,' *that* will come easy to you ; your way to every woman is a 'worship,' even to see you pick up Miss Isabelle's netting ball would make one think you worshipped her. I feel a very Mephistopheles explaining away these holy vows. We can take them, though of course this was not my love for Vere De Grey, nor yours for Marion Lisle ; she was as the sun of the morning, the dew of the evening, the

star of the night ; in fact, all that was sweet and beautiful to you ! ”

“ She *was*.”

Still, though he drew her closer to him she heard not the past tense conveyed in his emphasis, and she did glance up to him, and saw the look of rage and bitterness I knew so well, to be called up by regret for the bright career he had lost through her, and not for the lady of his love. But Greta, so comparatively a stranger to him, could still less carry effects correctly to their causes, if she quailed for one moment before that old strong love, still to her bargain she would stick. To Lansfeldt, a make-believe and a lie she would never go ; the one aim was gained, she would be the wife of a gentleman, and bear an honest name.

Her conscience ? She knew that she could satisfy. What had her whole life been but one of exertion, self-denial, purity, and right ? She did not waste word or thought on the man, high-born, handsome and accomplished, who was to be the magic “ open sesame ” to all she craved. Up to that very morning

she had looked upon him as a coarse and treacherous friend, and—though her sweet lips shrunk from uttering her thoughts—a vile and godless profligate. In her sombre, gentle, missionizing views of life, she ardently hoped it might yet please God to make a splendid saint out of the now splendid sinner; his darkened lot had made her dread for him the downward path of Vere De Grey, and often had a pure and girlish prayer gone up from her lips, that God would “save this second soldier from going to the bad.”

No, her bargain was struck. He, with what he thought a clever ruse, had kept from her what he never could conceal from me,—his passionate, over-mastering love. She was not as other light and foolish girls, nor loving or coquetting women. He knew, with her clear one idea of right, she never would have accepted a love she could not return. And certainly, she had unfortunately heard many a savage and bitter regret for the past and Marion Lisle, and as days went on she was sometimes almost

startled at her boldness in daring thus to link herself with the man who loved another; but she used to say with her mother's simple phrase,—

“ I have a sort of voice telling me, Julia, that it will be through my means Grantley will be brought to God.”

To this end she earnestly and religiously intended to devote every thought, care, and affection, though there was also an intense clinging to the shelter and respectability of Castle Vivian that held her to her bargain as well; this she never attempted to conceal from me, nor yet indeed from Vivian. It did but amuse and pique him. To do Greta Jocelyn justice, her worldliness had in it a yearning for good, and upward flight, not of ambition so much, as an aspiration for the high-toned and unsullied; she was not of a covetous temper, the mere worldly wealth that Vivian brought her was a very secondary lure. There was much to amuse me in watching this bargain,—for courtship one could scarcely call it; every outward sign of respect and consideration he gave

her as to his future bride; but what was the use of dwelling on a love she did not believe in, or would decline, if proffered?

So Vivian led on his old life of tasteful and industrious idleness, for so it seems best to call his trifling pursuits; excepting in that profession that he had left so sadly and had loved so well, there had been neither need or pressure on him for work. Still his was an acquiring mind; he was a good linguist, he was almost Protean in his varied gifts, and intensely fond of imparting them to Greta. The old song says,—

“ When love gets into the youthful brain,
Preaching and teaching are all in vain.”

She had done the preaching, but when he began the teaching, he had to find, as many have done before, how very little she knew thoroughly, or could do well; Greta’s education, like that of most other girls, was over a great deal too soon. They don’t all do as Becky Sharpe did, fling their dictionary at the poor teacher’s head, but they equally leave all that it contains behind them.

French conversationally she managed very well; she knew just enough Italian to *trahi-ra* her songs; when he tried her at German, she begged off, saying,—

“ You know, dear Grantley, I am hasty because I am so slow.”

And so with this paddyism she closed her book, and they turned their backs on “Vaterland” together; then again she had no taste for drawing, so she sat for her picture instead of at it. But she loved sacred music, and in this she excelled. I really think if I wished to realize the voice and face of an angel upon earth, I never could have done it so well as when I first heard Greta Jocelyn sing her evening hymn. It was in the nursery at the Honour, when the little ones were going to bed, and she was sitting in the rocking-chair, wrapped in a soft white dressing-gown; Sootie and Sarly, who always were naughty children, stood at her knee, and when she came to,

“ The ills that I this day have done,”

the sweet true voice seemed to have touched

some guilty chord, for they both burst into tears, and flung their arms round their sister. Her voice was perfection, though she had not his instrumental power, and so their mornings were spent. Old Bab said,—

“All the maids in Ivy Lane seemed to have gone crazy, and could stick to nothing for the concerts at Grove Cottage—

‘When Love tuned the fiddle-strings,
And Venus played the lute.’”

And it was after one of these pleasant mornings that used to send Ivy Lane on the whirl, that we were sitting together. She was all “Allegra” now, and Vivian had just left for the letters.

“Julia,” she said, “I sometimes think how sadly set-up and stiffnecked I have been; don’t you think if you but tried, you might learn to like any one? and I ought to have tried to like poor John; he did so love me, I ought to have tried to like him.”

Here Grantley came back.

“What’s in the wind now, Ladybird? tried to like poor John? Only let me catch

you at it, that's all ; as Susan says, ' You didn't ought, Greta, you, did, not, ought.' If you tried to like any one, you should try to like me."

A face full of love and joy looked up at him ; he was not very conceited, but he felt that in his case she had not found it very hard. So Vivian had at last found a sweet home for his heart to nestle in, an angel link to bind him for ever to the good.

" The thought was ecstatic, he felt as if Heaven
Had already the veil of futurity shown,
That with passions all chasten'd, and errors forgiven,
His heart had begun to beat pure as her own."

While she with all the intense energy of her one idea, that now seemed to embody her every earthly desire, thought, or deed, pushed on to her goal, namely, the day when he should make her Mrs. Vivian.

CHAPTER VI.

NOW Greta insisted that dear old Miss Bab must be told the first, so he called at once.

“ Well, dear ladies, I am come for your blessing, I am going to be married ! ”

“ Bebbora, open the window,” Izzbull cried, “ I am going to faint. The sudden roughness of this announcement”—here she stopped—“ give me my fan and my strong aromatic vinegar.”

She then walked to and fro like one bereft. Of course he could not make it out. He continued.

“ I am afraid, instead of a blessing, you will give me a box on the ears. I’m going to make a low match.”

“ There, I told that silly Greta not to make

too sure of proselytizing you. To think of such a taste, and your's so proud a race ! Well, who on earth is it ? Is it Phyllis Fell, the birds'-seed girl ? the adorable Shenkin at Van Amburgh's circus ? or Polly Hopkins, the barmaid at the 'Jolly Dogs ? ' " asked Bab.

" Not Phyllis Fell, the groundsel girl, not the adorable Shenkin from the circus, nor yet Polly Hopkins from the 'Jolly Dogs.' Go lower."

" You ought to blush, Mr. Vivian, for naming such creatures here. I am now more convinced than ever that

‘ Woman's love is found to cling
The closest round a worthless thing.’ ”

" Leave the house, Mr. Vivian, or Tom Fibber shall turn you out," screamed Isabelle.

" Well, dear Miss Bab, it is Glendinning's child."

Tears were in Bab's kind, honest eyes.

" Well, are you happy now, Miss Bab ? "

" Very, very happy, Vi. But how did you

prevail, when Digby, who loved her so dearly, failed ? ”

“ Exactly in proportion to that great love. She felt she had no heart to give him. She said, if you remember, that ‘ she could never love again, and yet had so strong a yearning for a gentleman’s name.’ Well, I fought her with her own sparring gloves, offered no love, and asked for none. I only told her I wanted a sweet little Methody to keep me straight. So our bargain is struck, and now we are all to haste to the wedding, before anything happens at Lansfeldt.”

Still old Bab had some shot to fire.

“ To think of Greta, after all her promises never to put herself at any man’s mercy ! ”

“ Well, but, dear Miss Bab, where would the world be if your creed of utter abhorrence were to be universal ? You speak exactly as if I should shoot my wife down as I hand her to the carriage, or stick her with the knife still sweet with her own wedding-cake. I am sorry to have come this morning, as Miss Isabelle is so poorly ; but Greta did so insist that you, the kind friend

of her childhood, should be told of the wedding first."

"Well, Bebbora, if you have the coarseness to prolong this, to me, most painful interview, I hope Mr. Vivian has not."

He offered her his hand, she fanned it from her as pollution.

Poor Bab, her kind, large heart was indeed rejoicing at the bright prospect for the crushed child of sorrow, little dreaming of the thunderbolt that was to descend upon her own defenceless head. She had known Izzbull absurdly insane on many occasions, but anything so atrocious in lunacy as this penchant for Vivian had never entered her brain. In his pleasant, easy way, when he was thus flung amongst us, he had found out our little weaknesses—had flattered and indulged them. Only to Greta had he been harsh, in the days when "they were first acquaint." Dear old Bab was rough and racy, and he used to trot her out sometimes even to propriety point. Miss Isabelle loved what she called the "military in general," but the "artillery best of all." He saw that

his flattery and attention, *ses petits soins*, delighted her, so he was bountiful of them ; but

“ Marry old Margery ?—no, no, no !”

We knew that things were going wrong with the ladies, for poor Miss Isabelle always sulked up and down the garden, bathing her brows from a long bottle of eau de Cologne, and old Bab would fling past us to the Honour, her sweet temper provoked beyond bearing at some irrepressible nonsense. However, we saw her coming to-day with her mysterious market-bag. It was a bag that even Susan had never peeped into, and that Mrs. Fibber scarce dare unpack. Once when she did, Susan was by, and, of course, published its contents.

“ Iss, indeed, 'em ; to think how things is all squashed together in old Miss Blantyre's black shiny bag—all together. There was the beefsteak scrunched close to Miss Blantyre's elastic boots. No wonder they calls poor Mr. Blood's meat so leathery. Iss, indeed. Then there was a piece of scented

soap for Miss Isabelle in the paper with the onions, a smelling fit to knock you back. Iss, indeed. Then there was some 'cidulated drops, all of a smash this hot weather, a greasing a bewful pair of Miss Blantyre's sky-blue gloves. Iss, indeed, indeed."

Well, in came the famous bag, with poor Bab looking very down. Still her thoughts were never long turned on her own vexations. She smiled at Greta, putting her dear protecting arms round her neck, as she often had done before.

" Well, to think, Greta, of such a catch for you ! Why, there isn't a peer's daughter in the county that Grantley Vivian might not have——"

Seeing him coming she assumed her usual tone.

" Well, Greta, if you must be at any man's mercy, as well at Vi's as not. But I've come in on business. Oh, Miss Dagger, to hear that fool Izzbull taking in. She has sent you back all your presents, Vi—love tokens, she calls 'em. As to the two pictures, they are such a pretty pair—and one,

the 'Britannia,' is justly my own—I would not part with them, as I told her they were money's worth, each of the frames—those lovely gilt—a matter of five pound, eh, Vi, I'll be bound? I'd half a mind to keep the silver stirrup and case——"

Here the poor woman opened the bag.

Now I did remember his coming up one day from the Agricultural Show at Bristol, bringing us a present all round. Miss Isabelle had boasted of what a graceful rider she had been; and he, taking out the netting apparatus, said, with what Greta called his look of worship,—

"I could not see you 'in saddle,' Miss Blantyre, so I thought I would see you 'in stirrup;'" and he placed it on her foot, saying how well she looked "in stirrup," and true enough she did. That clever Ouida had not then familiarized us with those dare-devil heroes she loves so to describe "in saddle," their smooth white hands with the iron grip, their lips pressed close as in a vice, skinny, sinewy, and sinfuller,—they look "the heirs of all the vices in the darkening rolls

of crime," as they flash past "in saddle." Before Ouida wrote, the idea of the discontented was, that the aristocracy was a bloated one. Hers is certainly a most emaciated one—her hero generally being, if perfection, like a burnt-out sheath of phosphoric bone. If they must be *le chair* or *le diable*, I'm for the old bloaters. Let it be a bloated aristocracy rather than one pale and parched, like that from which her scorched-out heroes come, who always smell of sulphur as they whisk past "in saddle." So was it hot work to-day with Miss Isabelle "in stirrup."

"Yes, Vi; Izzbull says, if I keep the 'Britannia,' she shall blush for the name of Blantyre."

Bab's was a rueful countenance.

"Here's the silver-chased netting stirrup, and the beautiful case to match. Then this lovely tazza from the Potteries, covered with cupids, Izzbull was going to break it as an emblem of her heart. Here 'tis, Vi; and that cost money too. These are the flowers you have given her from time to time, pressed down in a little case, inscribed,

‘*Tes fleurs, mes pleurs!*’ As much as to say, French fashion, Vi: ‘It’s fun to you, it’s death to me.’

“Well, I’ll go now to the list she demands from you. Give ‘em all back, Vi: they ain’t worth a sou. Now for the list:

“No. 1. A watch-pocket worked in silk in the form of a slipper, with heart’s ease and forget-me-not. Find me that, Vi.”

“Why, dear Miss Bab, fact is, I gave it to Mrs. Hopkins of the ‘Jolly Dogs,’ to pin up in her best mulberry-coloured bed.”

Then she went on.

“No. 2. A chain of brown braid clasped by a heart. Can I take her that, Vi?”

“That you can’t; fact is, I tied it round the puppy’s neck to remember which of them was promised to Mrs. Fitz-Flash.”

“No. 3. A velvet painting-cap, cerulean blue, covered with white love-knots.”

“Fact is, Miss Bab, it did drink up the Macassar so, no one could handle it. Go on.”

“Nos. 4, 5, 6. Three book marks with mottoes, ‘Thine and thine only,’ ‘Toujours à

vous,' 'Pensez à moi.' Come, you can find those, Vi."

"Fact is, I remember twitching them all into atoms, when I tore poor Julia's card-basket all to pieces."

Greta looked up.

"Well, do you know, Grantley, you set me thinking I did not know what had happened. You seemed like a man in dream-land to whom some great idea had come."

"And so there did, dear Ladybird. That night an idea broke in upon me, and," said he, leaning to kiss her, "and now, 'Eureka.' "

"Hooray, Eureka ! Eh, Ladybird !" he said, kissing her again.

"What dog Latin is that, Vi ? Hooray-kerring, indeed ! "

"I did not say Hoorayker, Miss Bab ; but I'm for a stroll round the 'Honour' to collect my thoughts, if not my tokens. Truth to tell, I'm afraid of you. 'When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.' "

"Just like you men ; you do the mischief,

and leave us to meet the trouble. Come back, come back," she cried in grief.

He was not like Lord Ullin's daughter; he did come back, and a soft voice said to him,—

"Grantley, write immediately to poor Miss Isabelle—don't apologise, that will but make things worse; simply say how grieved you are, so unintentionally to have misled her."

"Methody, you shall write the letter, and I'll copy."

He seated himself in his favourite chair, whence he had so often gazed at her in the days of his determined avoidance. Ah! little dreamed she in her pre-occupied mission of reforming him, and saving Patty, that those orbs of Don Juan, that had so turned poor Patty's brain, were even then fixed upon her, without one trust in woman's purity, love, or truth; gazing with terror at the second chain, much as he longed to wear it—still, from the time that first they met, with passionate worship, and this yearning of the man, the taste of the artist doubly confirmed, —but poor Greta knew none of this.

Of course all with Miss Isabelle was (except to the foolish old lady herself) a most transparent joke ; but then again, as an Irishman would say, “If he was not always with Patty, Patty was always with him.” No, she had only thought of Vivian as a sinner to be saved ; and it must be confessed, that of the saving of that sinner, she had thought a great deal.

Then he had made no secret before her of the violent love and bitter disappointment that had so marred his bright career—his consequent isolation in India from all of his own rank—this, he had talked of by the hour in his railings from the said chair to old Bab, in the meantime always piqued at Miss Jocelyn’s coldness for himself, contrasting with her warmth for his salvation.

I liked the old French proverb, “*Lavez vos linges sales chez vous*,” too well to say much ; but I saw Marion was fast fading from his memory, though the ruined prospects never would, for he knew himself for a first-rate engineer, an unequalled military draughtsman, who never now could win a

laurel, or make a name. I tried to point out the difference, but I could see Greta did not believe me when I once urged this upon her; still she decided on the marriage, saying,—

“Julia, a voice tells me, that God will hear my prayer, and never let my Grantley fall. I thank you, oh, so kindly, for seeking to comfort me; but,” and she blushed, “our engagement was but a bargain—he still loves Marion Lisle.”

“Then with this grievous doubt upon your mind, why venture it, dear child? Remember Sir John Digby even now is waiting for one dawn of hope.”

“Oh, don’t name him, poor dear John—I could never marry him—I’d sooner go to Lansfeldt.”

We were walking together in the Honour. I am very tall, but this fine young creature overtopped me, so that her face was very near to mine. Her words seemed to choke her, her soft throat seemed bursting with misery, when at last she spoke—

“Julia, I must pray to God to save him;

I feel that it would be my death, were I now to lose my Grantley."

I said no more. Here we met the children. Sootie and Sarly gave us enough to do; do what you would, you could not part them, they would "bark and bite, it seemed their nature to."

I treasured her words as words of bright omen, knowing the feeling on the other side so well, though he persisted that it would break the spell, if his love was made known to her; and I had got him into such good training, cast him on such a happy shore, I thought I would let things be.

To return to the letter. There is no need to transcribe it. Greta Jocelyn was not a quick or very clever girl, but she was so truthful and to the point, that what she wrote weighed more than the most charming flattery, or most cunning circumlocution. He put his hand in his old lazy way over the back of the chair, with—

"Capital, Ladybird; now I should have thought you would have peppered it up more with a pinch of religion or two, but

you are right, as it is to come from me, it wouldn't be natural."

He rose and copied the letter; then he resumed the chair. Bab came down the room to say good-bye.

"Vi, I really have not the heart to part with the splendid chased stirrup and case, it cost money. I'd sooner blush for the name of Blantyre——"

"Of course, dear Miss Bab, keep it, and blush away, bother the name of Blantyre. And," he continued, "after a bit Miss Isabelle's feelings will soften; and tell her if I cannot see her 'in stirrup,' how proud I shall be to see her at Castle Vivian, and to see her 'in saddle.' "

"Tell her no such thing, Miss Bab. What," said Greta, "mount the poor old lady on a frisky horse only to see her tumble off."

"Stop, Methody; give her the offer of the ride, then say the horse is suddenly lamed coming from the stables. I'm glad I'm going to be married; my wife will tell the white lies much the best."

“ Well, Vi, I’ll give Izzbull the invitation to Castle Vivian, it’s my idea that she’ll think she is grown a little bit lusty for being in saddle (so never fear, Greta) and won’t look well. Well, she was a beautiful rider, *she* will tell you as a *child* in the *three* days of Paris, 1830, but she was there with the Allies in 1815, a splendid girl of eighteen, when there were scarcely any horsewomen but the English. She was quite the admiration of the *Bor de Bullong*; and what she talks so much about,—so very, very slender, taper fingers, taper waist, and taper toes, and such a spring as she jumped on to saddle ! ”

Miss Bab here left.

Then I knew what had brought that clever Ouida into my thoughts, while dis- coursing on Miss Isabelle—it was their mutual taste for emaciation. She thought it *spirituelle*, artistic, aristocratic; yea, verily, rotundity, or, as Bab called it, lustiness, found no favour with Miss Isabelle; there was nothing rich in her idea of *la crème de la crème*. Instead of the lords of the soil

giving evidence of having been reared on the fat of the land, Miss Blantyre would prefer the effect that would be produced by skibbereen broth and potato parings.

Indeed, poor Bab told me she could not get to sleep at all the night that I came down, for Izzbull kept saying, "so vulgarly fat, poor woman—so coarse—how sad. Of course she is a legitimate Dacre, or she could not be the heir, or one would doubt it. Do you think there has been a *mésalliance*, and that Lupus Dacre married his cook?" said Miss Blantyre.

Fat! this was not pleasant hearing, but as I had never prized my beauty, it did not matter. I suppose Isabelle thought it was the cook that brought it into the family, associating it, it may be, with lard and butter. Then Bab told me she answered,—

" 'Well, poor old Guy was aristocratic enough in all conscience, you could count every bone in his back—every vein in his neck. I am glad Miss Dagger's better clothed—at least her bones. You saw the meat go down Guy's throat.'

“ ‘ But, Bebbora, spite of old Guy Decker’s miscalling his name, the Dacres are of good family, the first Lopus Dacre was an *attaché* or attendant at the court of Anne Boleyn ; I got Fitz-Flash’s peerage when I heard of the heir-at-law.’

“ ‘ Well then, Izzbull, Lopus Dacre, depend on it, was no skeleton, if he was a favourite at the court of Bluff Hal.’

“ ‘ Well, somehow, Bebbora, one expects folks of good family to look more refined and slender than the common herd.’

“ ‘ King Hal was neither refined nor slender, and yet he was of good family, the son of the White Rose of York ! Now, in mercy, Izzbull, go to sleep.’ ”

I don’t think even now Miss Isabelle believes that my mother was anything but a cook. She could not conceive how such a form as mine could have sprung from—

“ *A Graeme of the Netherby clan.*”

Time softens all things, and with an extra bottle of eau de Cologne, and a few romantic rambles with the still more heart-broken

Patty, Miss Blantyre was herself again, and took out her netting and flourished the chased stirrup, as though there were neither perfidy nor man about.

Mrs. Jocelyn was still at Lansfeldt, and had so won the old lord's heart that he would allow no one to attend on him besides. I felt I could very well play chaperone, the four little girls were at home with Nurse Denny and the young governess; indeed, the presence of the mother, although unintentionally, always kept the bitter and disgraceful past before the poor girl. She, for one so innocent, had suffered sorely—had battled bravely; and surely on the sweet hopes now that filled her, there should be cast no cloud. No, I would not have that woman sad and sorrowful, to bring such memories back,—

“ While in love's young brightest dreaming,
Full of hope and joy she roved.”

For she was very happy, I saw. Though of course with poor Greta she must look out for squalls when they made what he

laughingly called their bargain ; she thought she could be happy in simply doing her duty in gratitude to that man of rank and fortune, who under circumstances so peculiar was to make her his wife, although he loved another —she had not counted the cost when she came to love the man herself.

So dear Miss Bab concluded we would do without the mother—I, to play chaperone to Greta, and Bab as she called it, “keeping her eye upon Vi ;” besides Vi himself, now slander had done with him, was “Miss Dacre’s friend,” and no more her “*cher ami*,” while Nurse Denny and the governess would save the Honour. So we decided that nobody would talk ; besides there would be no time for them if they did, we were all putting on the steam, Greta, of course the highest pressure ; still Vivian was doing his very, very best to hurry the lawyer.

He did, indeed, do everything *en princ*e for Margaret Glendinning. Jointure, dower, and that dreadful word, widowhood, rung through old Guy’s counting-house, when the lawyer, Mr. Harding, called. But now even

this came to an end ; and poor Lord Lansfeldt rallied too, and sending up the magnificent bridal dress, accompanied it by a handsome cheque on the Ravendale Bank for everyday requirements.

Greta's determined energising seemed greatly to amuse Vivian ; he would laugh and say,—

“Ladybird, it is not one in a thousand that would be hauled up to get married as I am being, and no time to take breath ; but I promise if my coat and boots fit, and my tie is the right thing, I'll not keep you waiting. We'll stick to our bargain, like old Shylock to his bond ; you to your vow of saving a sinner, and I to giving a saint that sinner's name.”

One morning, a very few days before their wedding, they were strolling by the lake, when Vivian saw coming towards them a way-worn and dusty pedestrian. He started forward with a glad surprise, and friendly grasp,—

“Mark, old fellow, can it be you ? ”

Then Greta, ever on the watch, saw the

sad savage Indian look, as we called it, overspread his face, and all confused, as one bereft, he introduced them,—

“Captain Bannerman—Miss Lisle.”

His brain was teeming with the bitter past. Greta then came forward with all the self-possession Colonel Jocelyn would have done; and with her cordial pleasant smile, she said,—

“Miss Jocelyn, Captain Bannerman; but you are no stranger to me. Mr. Vivian often talks to me of his old friend, Mark.”

They shook hands very heartily, and Vivian had time to recover himself. He was very much provoked at his terrible blunder; but with the sight of his old comrade, the visions of the past thronged upon him—his cheated love, his bitter wrongs, his restive passion, and his reckless life. She, the worthless cause of all, had occasioned his confusion, though no loving thought was left of her. She was Lady Ramsay now, and he had forgotten Marion Lisle.

To Greta’s cheerful *aplomb*, in covering his *contretemps*, he felt very thankful, and

kissed her very fondly as he left her at the door of the Honour.

To the poor girl at that moment the fondness seemed unwelcome, because scarcely genuine, she thought, and she said to herself, "Dear Julia asked, 'Why, with this grievous doubt, should I venture it?' It must be, it must be, God will hear my prayer and keep him from evil; it must be, for oh, wild, foolish, bursting heart be still—I love him, though he loves Marion Lisle."

CHAPTER VII.

SUSAN ran to me,—

“Lor, mem, there’s a genelam coming with our Mr. Grantley, and just the same mustyshoes top of his top lip as Mr. Grantley wears. He’ll sure to stop to dinner. I am glad that the fish is such a fine one as Mr. Fitz-Flash sent us. You’ll let me have out the bewful silver—the great big lovely silver dish with the pond in it, and them sweet butter boats like a sailing ship, and the bewful wine coolers.”

I gave her leave, and she was mightily delighted.

Now the two young men came through to Grove Cottage. Vivian advanced,—

“My dear Julia, my friend Mark.”

I immediately recognized him as the

young man who was so terribly cut up on parting with Vivian on board the *Ava*. Even then I felt that it was a face to put faith in, and I was very glad to see him now.

“Ah, Julia, he heard of my first-rate quarters, and so found you out.”

“I was on the road to Castle Vivian, Miss Dacre, to hunt up my old chum, and where do you think I catch him, this old chum of mine? Why, romancing by a lovely lake, and more than that, with the Lady of the Lake.”

“Aye, and just in time to be my best man, Mark; that is, if you like the look of the bride.”

“Like her look? you frozen soul! Why, she is enchanting, bewildering,—be——”

“Stop, Mark, leave your neighbour’s goods alone. You’ll come, then? that’s settled.”

“You could not tell me better news, Grantley,” and he held out his hand again. Then passed over Vivian’s face that dark look of savage memory which the thought of India always called up. Why was his old friend so glad to see him in the right

path again? Was it because he had strayed so far out of it?

Still, prepossessed as I was with Mark, I was very sorry he had come, bringing the past up so vividly just before the wedding,—

“We could better have spared a best man.”

So we sat down to dinner to Fitz-Flash’s fine fish off little Susan’s “bewful dishes.” In the middle of dessert, Sandy brought in a note from the Honour to Vivian from Greta, which I thought showed great tact, telling him “how excessively busy she was going to be, and that he must have this evening alone with his old friend—she had hosts of letters she must write, and the little bridesmaids had to be fitted with their dresses; that Sootie and Sarly had a great feud on, and she only hoped it would not smoulder, and break out in the church, but she said she must leave the bridesmaids to the bridesman, and Captain Bannerman must part them. He seemed very pleased, and said he would walk on before us to Everley. Then Mark and I got back to India, little

Susan "doing for us" (and a long time, I thought, about it).

Lady Ramsay had wounded none of *les convenances*, and yet was very lightly talked of. Sir James and she were coming to England; the old Colonel said to be in a dying state. "And I firmly believe," said Mark, "it is her intention after his death yet to marry Vivian—of course knowing nothing of Miss Jocelyn."

I started,—a coquette coming to England with the firm intention of waylaying a man who had once been her slave! This had no pleasant sound, and I was afraid his being married would rather pique and promote the chase; for Marion was one to whom everything was doubly pleasant, if doubly wrong: still I felt sure that Vivian was safe, and that the last spell was the most potent. I should have felt less sanguine had it been for her goodness alone he had married Greta; but his passionate admiration in spite of himself; the efforts he made to fling her from him, that in their rebound did but bring her closer; the dark clouds that were over her,

—her every worldly drawback were his pledges for future truth and faith. Marion had won a willing—Greta, a most unwilling heart.

And now our best man had but three days for his outward adornings, and Susan said,

“The Captain was ‘that partikler,’ that she saw he thought Mr. Shodder had nothing fit for a genelam to wear.”

“Why not telegruff, Miss Dagger?” said Bab. “Send up his measure, and they’ll send a suit down in a trice.”

So the best man “telegruffed,” and Susan told Mrs. Fibber,—

“As they come down exact—his waist, his shoulders, and his wristies—as if he had been measured from top to toe with a five-foot rule.”

Miss Isabelle, strange to say, did not take to our best man, though he was of her dear artillery.

“Vivian had behaved shamefully,” she said, “and she could not so soon sustain such another shock.”

As Vivian walked on to the Honour, his

thoughts would go back to that sweet morning when she was all “*Allegra*.” She had, indeed, converted him since he had told her, “*Woman was as moonshine unto sunshine*,” &c.; now he confessed Burns had the best of it, and he blessed the day that,

“*Nature made the lassies, oh.*”

Expecting bustle and business, he took a peep to surprise her from the window in the lawn, looking for the bridesmaids and their finery, Greta and her letters. He gazed up the room, and there, sitting as her mother sat on the same low stool upon the rug, with the same heartrending wail from time to time escaping her, and with the same look of self-abasement which was so touching, weeping bitterly, was his intended bride. He saw that some fearful convulsion of feeling had reached her, by her soft bosom’s troubled heave. He then raised her.

“*Greta, my own love, why this cruel grief? Do you repent the step you have taken? Do you find you cannot forget De Grey? And that you cannot, I will not*

say, love, but, without repugnance, become the wife of any other man? Say but the word, darling, and you are free. Greta, to lose you will tear my very heart-strings asunder; but it shall be done. With you I lose my light, my guide, my all of good. I feel weaker than a woman when I think of days to come; for you to me seemed as the armour of light that the arrow of sin could never pierce. Perhaps you were right when you said you never could forget De Grey. Say but the word, and you are free, though you are my one link with Heaven; free, to tread your angel path alone, though I should go to the devil and the dogs again."

The poor self-torturer did not see that Vivian was quite as much overpowered as herself. She knew him to be a man full of tenderness to all human kind, that he could on most occasions speak fluently and well. She knew, too, that he clung to good, and that so he clung to her; and should never, if she could help it, go to the "devil or the dogs again."

"Grantley," she said, "I have no repug-

nance to become your wife, nor have I one thought of poor De Grey but that you would have me cherish. I have, as you know, gone through much sorrow, and felt a little upset at the Swan Lake." She paused, for here his brow lowered. He was nettled to think of the silly trip he had made in the surprise of Mark's unexpected appearance, and the many thoughts it had called forth. "But," she continued, reading his thoughts, "I was almost ashamed to think I could, in my present flush of happiness, have forgotten poor mamma's sad sorrows, Loraine's and Glendinning's deaths ; and I ask myself, why should there be such joy for me ? And yet even in that joy there is a shade ; for a voice tells me, that should you fail me, Grantley, I must lie down and die !"

"Hang that voice, that Methody voice ! Why listen to a croaking old raven ? Why, I shall blush for Mark to see Miss Jocelyn's red eyes. Listen to me !"

He led her to the piano, and seated her beside him, and striking a few rich chords on the instrument, after a few minutes of

meditation, he improvised the following. The orbs of Don Juan seeking inspiration in Miss Jocelyn's red eyes.

“In happier groves, and sunnier dells,
From care and sorrow free,
Where softest breeze of summer swells,
I'll sing love's song to thee.
I'll sing love's song to thee.

“By crystal spring, in sunshine's glow,
'Neath Nature's branching tree,
Where nectar sweet from flowrets flows,
I'll drink love's health to thee.
I'll drink love's health to thee.

“Thy cares, thy griefs, my faith to prove,
Shall shared and lighten'd be ;
While I but ask, my only love,
To live and die for thee.
To live and die for thee.”

“There's doggrel for you, Ladybird. At all events 'twas made for you, and it is less gloomy than the black raven's caw-caw. Well, the eyes must be blue again by this time. I won't have that saucy Mark talk of damaged goods, or Miss Jocelyn's red eyes.”

“Would you sing that song again? Sing slowly, that I may hear the words.”

Then he sang slowly, and she heard the words. Then she rose.

“Oh, I am much better, Grantley. It will do me good to see dear Julia; and never mind what Captain Bannerman says about Miss Jocelyn’s red eyes. My cry has done me good. You should not have coaxed and petted me, but have given me a good scolding, as we do Sootie and Sarly; for part of my grief was passion. It is a silly feeling to confess; but sometimes I do so wish that nothing had ever happened before you and I met.”

“In that case, Ladybird, if nothing had ever happened before, I don’t very well see how you and I could ever have met. At all events we must meet Mark and Julia, they are just at the Everley Gate.”

So we met them; and what with veil and parasol, he quite saved the credit of Miss Jocelyn’s blue eyes. Mark was excessively pleased with her. He was a thoroughly good-hearted fellow, and would have been pleased at any respectable choice for the once erring Vivian; but Greta was such a

union of high breeding and humility, style and simplicity, cheerfulness and sense, above all, so winningly beautiful, she won his approval at once. I thought that to-night Vivian allowed himself to show her much more tenderness than he had ever done before ; while she, poor girl, I could plainly see, doubted him more than ever. Ah !

“ Did the slip of the morning
Fall chill on her ear ? ”

As I have said, Greta Jocelyn could take in but one idea ; and the lowering looks of regret and remembrance which Mark had brought back to Vivian’s face, were all ascribed by her to the unforgotten Marion. Her love had come upon her as a thief in the night. Yes this, the love of her life, had come, as intense, as unconquerable as her mother’s for Walter Jocelyn ; but, thank God, her’s was a sinless love !

When they had both talked of their bargain, he was, as he allowed, but acting the part by which alone he thought to gain his end ; but she, poor girl, in her yearning for respect-

ability, had then but spoken as she felt. It was a wild appeal he had made to her to save him from himself, an appeal she knew that she could listen to, for she had determined to do her duty well. She had entirely misapplied his words “Because I loved another,” and her fears of course flew to that “other” that she knew he had loved; she could not bear to link them together, there was guilt in the thought—yes, she, a true wife, was the best shield a man could have, but these would come to the young, doubting, pious mind. Was there no self in all this? Should she sacrifice her own love? Then the question would arise—Sir James was old and very ailing, and Marion free, and Vivian chained! Might he not loathe the barrier he had himself set up between them? But with the living husband, even hinting this, seemed battling for sin.

She did think herself sadly weak for thus falling so easily beneath the spell; but had she reflected, the fair missionary must have owned that either in prayers, in chidings, in revilings, in commandings, exhortings, en-

treatings, Vivian had for the last few months of all her converts been the most constantly before her. This she would have realised, but that they were never separated, so that she never felt the warning void his absence would have made; even her two days at Lansfeldt, Patty's letter had filled with Don Juan. The very wrong she had done him about those wretched letters made her feel more humbly to the sinner who had played a part so righteous in that unrighteous comedy. So that when he said, "I do not ask you for your love, I do not offer you my own, &c., &c. Margaret Glendinning will you be that shield to me?" the engagement did but appear to her what she had called it, "a bargain," of which, of course in a worldly sense, she had got the best; not so, in other respects, her poor soldier was dead, Vivian's was a living love who could still fire shot. But once the belief had taken hold of her, that God would hear her prayer, and never let her Grantley fall, it seemed to her all would be well. Still she thought she held him by so slight a tie, that

all she did was done, not as by the choice of his adoration which she was, but as the wife of sufferance she conceived herself to be ; her life's duty seemed to be to charm evil from the man who trusted her. I need not say how doubly tight she wove his chain.

He had been very happy in the *laisser faire* of his Ravendale life, and seemed to shudder at the dull and stately calm of Castle Vivian ; this, Greta combated, there and there only. Now he had left the army, would there be sufficient to do ? An idle lover was bad enough ; but she knew that ten thousand times worse, was an idle husband. Lord Lansfeldt's most precarious state must keep Greta in England, for her mother would she knew be quite lost without her ; in entering on Lansfeldt, her eldest child, the prop and sunshine of her troubled life could not desert her now, nor,

“Be gone from the mountain,
And lost to the forest,
Like a summer dried fountain,
When its need was the sorest.”

So in consequence of this, they were not to leave England, or go beyond call.

The four little girls now joined us, Pussy, the eldest, was very tall of her age, fond of aping Greta, and being a fine lady. Nellie and Sootie came to me, while she and Sarly were to walk with Mark; Sarly snatched hold of his hand, when he committed the great *faux pas* of offering Pussy the other.

“Your arm, Captain Bannerman, if you please, only children walk hand in hand,” Pussy said, with great hauteur.

Looking towards the lovers, I heard Greta say, very earnestly,

“Grantley, I will not sail under false colours as I have done all my life, tell all the sad tale to your friend Mark. Of course, when we are married, nobody need have idle curiosity gratified about Mrs. Vivian.”

“You are quite right, Ladybird, and Julia says the same; but were the shadows that have clouded you, darker still, you would still be my best apology. It has been so ever since King Cophetua, and the Beggar Girl—

‘Proud man for his glory to pedigree flies,
But woman’s sweet story is told in her eyes.’”

The young men walked away together, I did not join them, for who could bear to hear again the sad tale of Everley Honour?

Mark and I had taken coffee, and the children their tea, and I thought that for the few remaining days that I was to act as Greta's mother, it really would attract less attention if we spent our evenings up there, instead of at Grove Cottage, from which Greta would have to return home late at night with the soldier friends, so we always took up dear old Bab, and all passed off delightfully; Sootie and Sarly sat up to supper and ran into no great excess, while Pussy and Nellie were always dressed up quite gala fashion.

Of course, I being away, "the mice would play," and cook thought it right to inform me that "things had now come to that pass, that Susan Scapegrace was for ever over the wall talking to that false and fawning Mrs. Fibber."

I think I named that from the lightness of her steps, I did not remark that the child was in the room, while Mark, all unconscious

was telling me of Sir James and Lady Ramsay's return to England.

Primed with this, Susan ran off and discharged her load over the wall.

"Well, I for one, spite of the Castle Vivian four horses, don't envy Greta."

"Lor, Susan, who for? I should say 'twas beyant mortal luck for Mary Bell's child to marry to a Castle, and she herself, many's the day, have stood in the same Sunday-class as meself, and my Lizer only got Tom Gumley, the Hannington bill-sticker. Of course, I'm a Godfearing woman, and fair to say the Lord is just, though 'tis hard to see it in this case. But why don't you envy Greta? eh, Susan; you know what you tell me never goes further. You don't envy her, for why?"

"Iss, indeed, I don't envy her, for the lady our Mr. Grantley was so fond of is coming to England with her old man dying, the Capting says, and that then she intends to marry our Mr. Grantley. He used to be for ever a talking of her to missus; then

he couldn't abide Greta, and called her no end of bad names, a witch and such like."

"Lor, Susan, how strange; they always said at Hannington as witches ran in the Bell family. There was Bessie Bell as bewitched old Squire Tracey's son, he married her, he died in a year; and Phillipa Bell bewitched old Barnet the banker, and the bank broke afore the twelvemonth was out, and they had to cut across the seas; and Mary Bell for certain sure bewitched poor Glendinning, and he went mad and shot hisself; then to bewitch the son of a lord to marry her! I'll never believe but she sold her soul to have such luck. Good Lord deliver us!"

"Iss, indeed, and 'the Lord make us truly thankful.' "

This pat piece of piety Susan had got from grace after dinner.

Now one evening, when dear old Bab was playing propriety with me at the Honour, and moderating the orgies of Sootie and Sarly, Miss Isabelle went into Mrs.

Fibber's dark parlour, who informed her that,—

“Susan had had it from the Capting's own lips, that Mr. Vivian's first love was coming to England with her first husband dying, determined on marrying him.”

Next morning Miss Isabelle told poor Greta that,—

“Though she had at first extremely reprobated her unmaidenly haste, she now quite approved of it, for ‘there was many a slip ‘tween the cup and the lip.’ Sir James and Lady Ramsay were coming to England, it was thought he would die on the voyage.” She concluded, “So, Greta, do not lose a day,” adding, with a prophetic giggle,—

“For the old love rekindled
Outburns all the rest.”

Now Greta knew that silly and spiteful as Miss Blantyre might be, she was above falsehood, and only repeated what she had heard, coarse and cruel as it was to parade it to her, still it was the truth.

Marion free, and Vivian chained! and she the bar between them!

As I have said, all her erring mother had borne for Walter Jocelyn, save the sin, she would fight through for Grantley Vivian; thus for his future happiness and well-being she would resign him to the woman of his choice, for so would she best be performing her vow of holding him to the good.

Vivian had ridden over to give his last orders at the Castle; Mark, with herself and the children, were strolling in the Honour. She took him aside, saying,—

“ Captain Bannerman, you knew Lady Ramsay, Marion Lisle? I know she behaved ill to your friend, but tell me truly, do you, do others, think well of her? ”

“ Miss Jocelyn, not a man in the regiment but knows her for the most cursed and arrant flirt that ever breathed. She all but ruined the finest fellow we had, your own Grantley, and now old Sir James is the laughing-stock of the mess. I have the very worst opinion of her indeed, Miss Jocelyn. I feel I do not wrong her when I place her among such as I should not name to you. She is bringing the old man over in the *Simla*,

in a dying state they say. She'll never get round Vivian again, but I give you fair warning, she may try to vex and worry you, for this marriage will be a terrible mortification to her; she had an idea that his love was undying, and in her cold vanity it seemed to her quite a feather in her cap that she had ruined Grantley Vivian."

He knew that the girl had asked him this with a purpose, and so determined to speak out. And now Miss Pussy evidently wished for a bit of flirtation, and took Mark's other arm; this little minx in muslin had a great notion of being admired, and thought she looked as well arm-in-arm with Mark as Greta did with Vivian.

Greta fell back musingly. Anything like the self-sacrifice she had proposed could but be the ruin of the man she loved; she could see nothing in his future linked with Marion but what made her shudder. She gave her strange romantic project no further thought, her heart was lightened of a heavy load, still always looking for a cloud. She

was not quite so sure as Mark that Marion would not get round Vivian again.

Now Colonel and Mrs. Jocelyn came up by desire of the old lord, with the splendid Lansfeldt liveries, and the wondrous "four horses, all roan; the Castle Vivian, all white; and the Masseys and the Brands, all bewful; sixteen 'osses in all."

Susan said,—

"Never was such a wedding as ounr, excep when the Earl of Burleigh married Lady Clara Vere de Vere."

She told Mrs. Fibber that the "sovering the Capting give her, she should hand over to mother, but that she should keep Mr. Grantley's to buy something for his sake."

They were married by Canon Brand, Colonel Jocelyn giving, as he called her, "his favourite child away." He then handed her the pen, and she signed herself "Margaret Glendinning," a name she had never signed before. The best man looked after the bridesmaids, who was the first to call Pussy "Miss Jocelyn." He also prevented Sootie and Sarly from taking too much.

The bride looked as stately as she was beautiful, her Honiton falling in zephyry clouds round her richly modelled form. Her veil was not whiter than her snowy bosom was; while from beneath her wreath of orange blossoms fell her full and wavy curls. She looked very happy, too, for she saw that her marriage had indeed been a crowning joy to her poor mother, and the connection with Vivian everything that *he* could wish, who had been her fond, indulgent friend for more than twenty years. So she left the wedding breakfast radiant and joyous.

Mark followed Vivian upstairs. She had put on her travelling dress, and was slipping down the back staircase to say good-bye to the servants, when she passed the door of Mark's bachelor bedroom standing opened, and he said:—

“Well, old fellow, how should you look if you met Marion Lisle?”

“Confound it! I should cut my throat if I met Marion Lisle.”

It seemed as if a mortal coldness were creeping over her—a death in life that left

her perfectly unconscious of all around. I stepped out of the breakfast-room according to promise. At the foot of the stairs stood the bride. Great God, what a sight ! That face so full of light and love was blanched as the dead, the young firm tread was an uneven totter. I had heard of the spectre bridegroom, surely here was the spectre bride ! While waiting for her, Vivian had turned to me with—

“ Julia, God bless you ! Among the many righteous deeds the recording angel will have to send in of you, the brightest and the best of all was the kindness that prevented one poor fellow from going to the bad.”

She kept her face turned from him to hide her bitter tears.

“ Tell papa and mamma,” she said, “ I could not bear to say ‘ good-bye.’ Julia, pray for me; I fear I have committed a deadly sin this day.”

She then passed on into the carriage, and there gave way to a wild burst of grief. He was distressed beyond measure. He had never seen such sorrow. All unconscious

that the bride of the morning could ever have passed by the little room in that far-away nook, he felt truly thankful when a sweet sleep seized her. He put her up as comfortably as he could, the horses bounded lightly through the forest, and at the noise and bustle of the first stage she woke. He was too glad to be quit of prying eyes, and sent back the carriage, to take the train. He brought her into the station-room, and then went out to see after the luggage. When he returned, she put her hand in his, saying,—

“Even now, dear Grantley, I feel it would be less a sin were we to part. Ours are not the feelings to begin life together with. I grieve over the impiety that led me to talk of love and marriage as I did, but the burden of my guilt would not be so heavy if we parted now. The time may come when you may curse the day you met me. I could bear desertion better, if the severance began thus soon. Even now, dear Grantley, say but the word.”

“What, on my wedding-day to part with

the beautiful bride of my soul? *I* curse the day we met! *I* that hold you to be the very choicest blessing God could confer on man! What, want to leave me Greta? Unsay your cruel words—you, my light, my love!"

He could say no more for the whirr of the engine. Poor girl, to her he was perfectly incomprehensible, still the sad stinging doubt would arise, was she but part owner of her husband's heart, though she was Mrs. Vivian?

CHAPTER VIII.

YES, she was Mrs. Vivian ; the highest rung of her hope's ladder she had reached ; she was the wife of a gentleman, and placed beyond scorn and spite. She was no longer the waif Greta Jocelyn, envied for her false colours, or despised for her humble birth ; sorrows she had known, severe ones, but not the sorrow she felt now ; and why ? She had been brought up in the very atmosphere of love, the "dear papa," and "poor mamma," the fond though fractious girl Loraine, loved none as they loved Greta ; the boys would obey and pet Loraine, but they would all have died for Greta ; the little girls looked up to their elder sister as to all that was good and grand and glorious. And poor De Grey

went to his destruction when the wicked deathbed promise parted their young lives. She was Mrs. Vivian; one far more attractive, more gifted than De Grey sat by her side, worshipping her as a very slave, and those lips pressed her cheek with rapture, that had said that very morning that he must cut his throat if he met Marion Lisle!

Unhappy girl! Once more she only heard and did not see, or she would at last have been convinced of his sincerity.

There was not one regret on his joyous face, as in mere banter on his wedding morning he thus named Marion Lisle.

It was what she deemed his frightful seeming and unreality that so puzzled and distressed her, so that once again when they got to their hotel, she drew back,—

“Even now, dear Grantley, it will be less a crime.”

At last he got quite out of patience.

“Greta, dear wife, what do you mean? I must have no more nonsense, sheer non-

sense; here comes the first vow of the bargain, you must obey."

He put her arm into his own, and by main force led her into the dining-room of the hotel. She only caught the word bargain, which sounded so heartless and horrible now; yes, she knew it had been a bargain, and nobly and munificently she felt he had performed *his* part. What was her duty? She had married this man to save him, dared she desert him now?

Within the spell of his social charm she knew no cloud, it was only when alone his many inconsistencies troubled her; that he had avoided, doubted, and disdained her, it was not in woman to forget, even little Susan's repetition of his saucy sayings rankled now. Yes, he had called her "a bird from a bad nest, and her very name a lie," and yet for no Duke's daughter could he have provided on a more princely scale than for Glendinning's child. Beyond her birth there were no other shortcomings to mortify him. Miss Jocelyn was no beggar girl; she had been a good deal in society,

though under clouded circumstances ; she had the best substratum of good breeding, a thoroughly Christian heart and pleasant temper, while the constant intercourse with the Colonel had stamped his grace upon her. Mrs. Vivian was a wife to be proud of, and he was very proud of her ; they spent their first few weeks in town, he was anxious to introduce her at once to his friends. He was a rich man—so many a friend had he.

And now Lord Lansfeldt died, and Mary Bell, to the horror of “mother and Mrs. Fibber,” was Lady Lansfeldt. Jocelyn wrote up to dear old Miss Bab to bring her down. He sent up two carriages, saying that Sootie and Sarly must travel in the one with their mother, as they were sure to behave so badly—they would distract her attention, and keep up her spirits.

Poor woman. Late the evening before, I saw her pass on to the churchyard, to take a last look at the lonely tombstone, beneath which the husband of her youth was laid, and when she reached Grove Cottage, she

walked with a step so failing, I was quite alarmed. I said,—

“Wait, dear Mrs. Jocelyn, I will come with you to the Honour.”

She led me to the Swan Lake.

“Oh, lady dear, tell me, there can be no future hell for me. Surely my God will sheathe his sword at last. And now to go to Lansfeldt, and my Walter, the last lord ; and my boys, sons of shame. Why do I live, and others die ? ”

Why did she live ? Such was her superb *physique*, that though not far off forty, and in spite of the scathing blasts that had swept over her, not a tress of her rich brown hair was grey—not a seam or line upon her fair and dimpled face. Was it the curse of *Le Juif Errant* ? *Marchez, marchez toujours* ? “Whom the gods love, die young.”

“Stop, Mrs. Jocelyn, stop ; the past is gone beyond recal, charge yourself as you will with your past errors ; but yours is not a solitary case. Think of the hundreds of childless families, or those with daughters

only—the long line of De Grey failed with poor Vere, and Admiral Chester left none of his name behind, though Mrs. Chester had four sons.”

“ Yes, but lady dear, she did not deserve to lose them, and I did. It seems, sad as other thoughts are, ‘ the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched,’ is the ever-present memory of my two dead boys.”

I said how proud she would one day live to be of her handsome girls; but I could see she had given none of her heart to these children born in the sun of prosperity: they were Lord Lansfeldt’s daughters, and had neither part nor lot in her sorrow and shame.

Next morning we were all on the look out for the carriages as they drove up to Miss Bab’s. Mother and Mrs. Fibber, and many old friends and traducers turned out to see her; but they saw her not—low crouched behind Nurse Denny, broken with grief, the peasant peeress sat. However the Hon. Sophia and the Hon. Charlotte each pre-

sented herself at a window on coming to the title. They did what was expected of them, behaved as badly as they could ; but none of their enormities could arouse their mother.

Miss Bab, the two elder girls, and the young governess, filled the second carriage.

So passed away from Everley the poor young soldier's guilty wife.

Her husband lifted her from the carriage, and brought her in to his three sisters. Mechanically she bowed her head, and, trembling, held forth her hand ; words failed her entirely, all received her kindly, and none flung a stone at the Magdalen as she entered that old hall.

No ; but two soft, fond arms were flung round her, with

“Mother, dear !” and then she faltered forth,—

“My Greta.”

Yes, the old lord was dead ; the dreaded hour had come and gone when those two met at Lansfeldt.

Then the Colonel took out old Miss Bab,

while Vivian saw after the children. She was delighted at seeing her favourite again.

“ Well I do declare, Greta, if you don’t look all the better for being at the mercy of that vile Vi.”

And the old man slept with his fathers.

The good news was brought to Ravendale, that on the opening of Lord Lansfeldt’s will, they read,—

“ And I give and bequeath one thousand pounds absolutely to Barbara M’Tavish Blantyre, in grateful memory of her twenty years of kindness to the unfortunate family of my son.”

In the papers the poor mother read :

“ This ancient family traces to the Conquest. The title becomes extinct on the death of the present lord, who is without male issue, having only four daughters. His lordship is Lord Lieutenant of Ravendale, and a colonel in the army.”

Vivian and Greta remained at Lansfeldt just to put poor mamma in training, and to see to the education of Pussy and Nellie, and the civilization of Sootie and Sarly. She felt

severely, she told Vivian, how neglected they had been; for she had been so incessantly occupied with Loraine the last twelve-months, everything else had been neglected.

“ You see, Grantley,” she continued, “ if we do not get them into something like training now, we shall never be able to hold any rein over them. It is so strange that poor mamma, wildly as she loves me and my brothers, takes no interest in these little ones. Papa is kind; but even *he* does not love them as he loves all of us. It would seem as though it were some slight jealousy of their happier lot. Depend upon it, we are all the better for being beloved, though you disbelieve in love.”

“ You may take Pussy and Nellie in hand, Ladybird; but I’ll have Sootie and Sarly left to me. I’ll not have one jot or tittle of their excrescences lopped off. I like watching them as I used to do the little tiger cats in India before they came to their claws. These two little firebrands show themselves in their true colours. These little embryos

of womankind are like the rest of their sex in a state of nature, the very essence of original sin——”

“Grantley, how dare you! Well may dear old Bab call you that vile Vi.”

“Pussy will make a splendid coquette; and little Nellie, a blue-eyed saint like you. Teach them, dearest, all your own pretty tricks to lure a poor fellow to his doom, as you did me: there was no withstanding you. Now those two bottle imps, your sisters, deceive nobody; honestly tearing out each other’s eyes, and openly howling their baby anathemas into each other’s ears. They say, ‘Scratch a Russian and you will come to a Tartar.’ I say, ‘Scratch a woman’—only you must go a great deal deeper, they are *so* sly—‘Scratch a woman and you’ll come to a cat.’ I don’t mean to be personal, Ladybird, you are not a woman, you are an angel.”

Why should she look up with a sigh?

“Oh, don’t say so; for men don’t love angels, Grantley.”

“You don’t mean, little Methody, that

under any circumstances, you'd rather be anything than an angel ? ”

“ I am not jesting ; but let us leave that sacred word alone. I would be something less exalted, more earthly ; for then I should feel more sure of love. It always seems to me that men love best those who are inferior, not superior to them. If the wife is a goose, he feels nearer the owl, and the contrast sends up his wisdom. Flattery soothes—what though its dust be blinding ? Vain folks never light on truth. I do not say such things should be : only that such things are. Never call me an angel, Grantley ; it strikes so icy cold.”

“ But do you suppose, my own love, that but for the all-prevailing element of the angel in you, I should have ever married you ? Men don't marry women to save them, when nine out of ten drag them down to destruction. I look on you, Greta, not only as my wife, but as a pure and holy sister, a loving and still lovely mother, my all, my heaven ! ”

Here he kissed her. She knew she was all

this to him ; but the jealous girl sighed, and asked herself,

“ Was she all that Marion Lisle had been ? ”

He paid her the compliment of leaving the vexed educational question in her hands entirely.

“ Well, Ladybird, do as you think best with Sootie and Sarly ; for, after all, I might get out of patience with 'em, and seal them down like the grouse, and send 'em off to John O'Groats house.”

Dear old Miss Bab was an immense treasure ; though Pussy at first was rather afraid of her turning up her tail, and her other unique mannerisms in speech and action. But, somehow, Miss Bab went down at Lansfeldt, even with her “ rip ” in the lanes, better than the most buckram bourgeois in moire antique would have done, she was just put down for a well-born old oddity, and such folks always pass.

And so the household of the new lord got shaken into shape ; the personal advantages of my Lady stood her in good stead ; her

form was queenly, her manner simple and unpresuming. She had also the rare faculty of divining the thoughts, and this made her sympathetic and recipient in her intercourse with others ; hers was very ticklish ground, she knew it, and trod lightly.

So at last, some of the more kindly made their way to Lansfeldt ; Mrs. Vivian returned her mother's calls, as she did not visit just at present, her daughters being so young.

Lord Lansfeldt was very happy amongst the beloved surroundings of his youth, and told Miss Bab, " that if he had not weighed fourteen stone instead of ten, he should have felt quite the Walter Jocelyn he had been five-and-twenty years ago." Vivian was a special comfort to him, for he was a future friend for those poor boys so fondly loved, so foully wronged. Greta found her affectionate hands quite full, Grantley and the children being dreadfully jealous of each other. Did she but run up into the nursery to cry " Peace peace, where there was no peace," then he must have her out for a stroll in the shrub-berries, or bid her don her habit and mount.

Was she with him, then Sootie would immediately get the corkscrew down her throat, or Sarly had spoiled her new crape with Vivian's red paints. Dear papa had the magazines to cut, or the papers to post, or the villagers to see; and all this must be shared by Greta. Poor mamma could do nothing without her. Miss Bab was a great authority, still she always concluded with—

“Lady, dear, I think we'll wait until I can ask my Greta.”

Vivian got impatient at last, for he said, “he was obliged to put up with but a tithe of Greta.”

He still shirked Castle Vivian much against her will. They were taking their last stroll at Lansfeldt together, and she was urging this.

“Time enough, Ladybird. I wish old Chester's sons had lived, and that I was but a soldier of fortune again. Oh, there's nothing half so sweet on earth as the sunny side of a baggage waggon ! ”

“Well, I for one, would rather you were a man of fortune, Grantley. I'm Sybarite

enough to confess that I prefer the easy springs and cozy cushions of the Castle Vivian chariot to the sunny side of a baggage waggon."

Then her young face mantled into its maiden-blush bloom, for she thought of that past, when another, not herself, was to have travelled that sunny side with him.

But he stuck out, saying,

"That though they had been married two months, he had, what with his maiden aunts, and his dreadful little sisters-in-law, had no honeymoon."

She agreed to remain another month away to indulge him, and then she determined that the first Christmas of their married life should be spent at Castle Vivian.

CHAPTER IX.

“CONFESS now dearest, I have had no honeymoon. Our first month was spent with my own dreary dowagers, Aunt Bell and Aunt Letsey; or, as your west country folks would call it ‘with the ants.’ Matey with her tic and tatting; Bell with her beef-tea and bobbing-net; and that abominable old Letsey, with her vegetable diet and dinner pills. I’m not a sluggard, and don’t want to go to the ants.”

“ Still Grantley we have been so happy without one, let us make at once for Castle Vivian. I have always dreaded a honeymoon, for, truth to tell, when Loraine and I were quite young girls, we read Bulwer’s Student, and there, I think it was, that we met with the account of the young couple who looked

at each other so long that all things grew dazy ; he saw a squint coming to her eyes, while she, with horror, marked from day to day a wart rising on his nose. You may look at the blue sea till it turns green, such may be the case with my blue eyes."

" Into any other colour, but not into green, a woman superior to all can be jealous of none."

She did not quite think with him, but she went on,

" And then to think of my seeing a great big wart at the end of your nose, Grantley ; and old Bab, to comfort me, will say, ' There, I always saw it coming ; to think Greta, that you should be at the mercy of a man with a wart at the tip of his nose.'

" Now I have not descried even a pimple of imperfection about you yet, nor you, my squint, so let us go to life, and work before we do get tired of each other."

But no, he had determined he would have his honeymoon, and he declared that after a course of Sootie and Sarly, nothing but rest and the sea-breezes could restore Greta.

Alas for youth's romance, these two held
their honeymoon at the Old Steine, Brighton.
And they were very, very happy :

“ They never thought to count the hours,
For they floated in light away,
Like the opening and the closing flowers,
That laugh to the summer's day.”

They had too many resources within themselves ever to be dull or weary. He was still absorbed in the profession which he had lost and loved. It was just at the awful climax of the Crimean campaign, after which it is in vain to call “ blundering no murder,” many new contrivances of comforts and necessities were thought of when almost too late, of ambulance improvements, and regimental reforms. Vivian sent up several models and suggestions, and on the adoption of a new knapsack of his, he was so delighted, Greta said, you would have thought he had been a young artisan on sixteen shillings a week, and that the whole luck of his life depended on the cast of that die.

Greta, too, was cumbered about her everlasting little sisters, Miss Pussy must go to a

first-rate finishing school without delay, and little Nellie follow after. Then some very penal penitentiary must be found for Sootie, some rousing reformatory for Sarly.

Poor incorrigible little twins! Their Lilliput penitentiaries were soon found, for Greta knew there would be no peace at Lansfeldt until these two were immured.

The days were now drawing in, and in the mornings, Greta found she was not so good a climber as she used to boast of being, so the very long rambles of the honeymooners ceased. He found her arm lean heavier, and her step was not so light; but she was one of those fine young creatures who never had had a day's illness, and she would not give in now. His fondness for her was unbounded, sorrowfully sensitive as her strange engagement had made her, she began to hope all things now. Then she would ask, could her paradise last? And in her humble piety she prayed that her love for the creature might not surpass that for the Creator. There had been a time, not a twelvemonth gone, when she had seriously contemplated taking vows

of poverty, and work; when poor Miss Bab herself could not have been more "wedded" to celibacy, and she had been firm and consistent; for all the patient attachment and worldly advantages of poor Digby could not prevail against it.

And now, alas! for the weakness of womankind! She had not a thought or dream but had twined itself round the Vivian of her maiden preachments, Julia's faulty Indian friend—Patty's Don Juan.

It was about this time that the *Simla* arrived in Southampton Water, and a few days after a pair of bright dark eyes at the Albion Hotel were speering out the company from the *Brighton Gazette*, where she read,—

"At No. — Old Steine, Mr. Grantley Vivian."

Until that very morning husband and wife had been correctly entered together, but Mrs. Vivian, by mistake, was left out now. Up to the window started the bright-eyed reader,—

"What! under a roof of that very square was Grantly gazing at the blue

sea at the same time as herself? and perhaps, with herself, regretting their past? Never mind, she knew he was one whom time could never change; creaking as Sir James had been for months, he had never been so nearly falling to pieces as now. Of course, when she married Colonel Ramsay, Vivian Chester was alive, and 'Granty nothing but a sub'; now times were altered; but if he was very wealthy, she would be wealthy too. No, the man who had perilled all for her, never would replace her or love another; see him she must before the sun went down that night, and by good luck Sir James was off to town to Dr. Graeme's and would be away all day. Lucy Lumpforth was expected, but the chambermaid would do to receive her, she would make at once to Granty."

That very morning the honeymooners had had a stroll over the Downs, the breeze setting in too roughly from the sea, and Greta came back very, very tired. She said,—

"I think, dear Grantley, I will lie down.

I will join you at dessert,"—they dined rather earlier than most folks, after the custom of Old Ravendale. "I will have a glass of sherry. Roast me a few chestnuts. I shall be all right after a strong cup of coffee, then I will write some letters for Lansfeldt."

So he went for the first time to his dinner alone; he didn't like it, but he was no foreboder, he only thought he had taken her too far. After dinner he got out his drawings. She did not appear, but he would not wake her, and then he betook himself to his chair right in front of the fire in his old way, and roasted the chestnuts. I need not describe his passing his hand over the back, the door opened, he said,—

"My own darling, I was just coming across to you."

"Were you really, Granty, dear? but I could not resist, so I have come across to you."

A woman's soft hand was in his, but it was not his wife's; glossy curls danced

on his forehead, but not *her* sunny brown ones.

“Oh, Grantly, if you only knew how sincerely I’ve repented! Fancy what it must be to have a husband who coughs all night and cries all day! You used to swear sometimes, but enough to make you, when I let off the pistol with John Wylde at the ‘Smugglers’ that night. Then to think of that wild galop to the Devil’s Punch Bowl with Harry Scarum, and my going all round the Island with Captain Cook. You used to swear, Grantly, but never coughed or cried. He’s very bad, the old man; they say if I do take him back, I shall have to fling him overboard.”

Vivian shuddered.

“Ah, at your drawings again; I used to mend your pencils, Grantly. Let me mend your pencils now? Ah, I knew God would reward me for being so true to you.”

And so came Lady Ramsay’s torrent forth, just as bewilderingly as the waters come down at Lodore. Then she brought her rosebud lips to kiss the brent brow they had

so often kissed before, it was but a moment they were there,—no,—but in that moment came in Mrs. Vivian !

Jocelyn's daughter was quite equal to the occasion, and held out her hand with her usual kindly grace, so that the delinquent felt sure *she* had not seen. Not so Vivian ; by the cruel anguish so convulsively concealed, he felt she had seen all ; he did feel ludicrously like Captain Macheath between Polly and Lucy, but being *sans reproche*, he was *sans peur*. He rose immediately with,—
“ My wife—Lady Ramsay.” And, “ Greta, this is Marion Lisle.”

Lady Ramsay must have been quite three years the senior ; she had been the wife of a public man, and should have been able to meet a social crisis ; but she could not, like Greta, control herself, and thus spare others. She stood aghast, her sparkling eyes darting fire, and like the Assyrian charger,—

“ Her nostril all wide
As through it there rolled out the breath of her pride.”

She swung past Greta, who she felt had

fouilly wronged her; past Vivian, too, who was, however, far too much a courtier to let her leave his house alone; he gave her his arm.

“Granty, to think you could ever forget me—and then to marry another.”

“Fact is, it was the force of example, Lady Ramsay.”

“Ah, but my case was very different. You might have waited, you had not Castle Vivian then.”

To this he could say nothing, for had not his blue-eyed Methody married him for Castle Vivian too?

“Marion, yours was the triumph and mine was the wreck. When all around was dark and gloomy, my good name perilled, my army hopes blighted, I did not curse you, Marion, spite of your foul wrong. It was when a distrust and hatred of all woman-kind made life and home so bitter, when I thought *her* bright glance misleading as the spell of devilry, *her* soft voice beguiling as the spitting out of adder’s poison, when I turned in horror from *her*,—that first and

fairest that we left just now, it was then I cursed you, Marion, that you had turned a soldier and a gentleman into a blackguard and a brute. But I am really sorry to hear this bad account of Sir James? I owe him much for his shelter, and I could shoot off my right hand to think 'twas with that coward arm I struck him."

"Bother, Sir James; he's as bad as he can be. That makes it so vexing to think you have not been true. *He* may die, but that young person never will. Then it wasn't true you broke your heart? And you didn't drink with the common soldiers forty days and forty nights, as Celia Blaster said?"

Vivian was simply shocked. Those holy numbers connected with that great sacred sorrow, thus to profane them, and tack them to a lie!

"Marion," he said, "you and I have met for the last time. Should it be that I must remind you that you are Lady Ramsay, and that I—heart and soul, through life till death—am wedded to another."

He raised his hat, and she passed into the Albion Hotel pouting like a child.

Poor Grantley ! And he, with his heart of flesh, had loved that bit of flint !

Her face was very flushed, and her eyes very fiery, as she said to the waiter :

“ Any lady for me ? ”

“ Lady for Lady Ramsay ? ” shouted the old waiter in deep bass.

“ Lady for Lady Ramsay ? ” sung out the young one in tenor.

“ Lady for Lady Ramsay ? ” cried the page in his voice that was breaking.

Then came down poor Lucy.

“ Yes, dear Marion ; here I am.”

“ How stupid. Why didn’t you run downstairs at once, instead of getting me called through the house like an outlaw for debt. Well, there, sit down, make no more blunders. Any of you girls married yet ? I thought not ; and how came you not tell me of Grantley Vivian’s marriage, letting me humble myself so ? ”

“ I did not know it myself till after you had sailed, when a line came from Miss Dacre

to old Mrs. Nip. A beautiful creature he married, so Miss Dacre said; a daughter of Lady Lansfeldt's by her first husband."

"Beautiful creature, not a bit; a nasty, tall, great, fat, big, blue-eyed thing."

"And yet Mark, my cousin, said, had not Grantley stood before him, he must have married her himself. He told me she was one out of much tribulation; and Miss Dacre said she had seen great sorrow."

"Nonsense; old Julia would grind a romance out of nothing. I don't believe it. 'Came out of tribulation'—fudge! She came out of a nobleman's house—a peer's stepdaughter; and my broken-hearted Grantly, who could never love another, married for rank. 'Seen great sorrow'—faugh! She has seen her way to the very finest fortune in the West of England."

Lucy knew what this was worth. A peer's stepdaughter could be no lure to Castle Vivian.

It had been a long tiring journey for the "Lumforth girl" from Portsmouth; and she looked remarkably dank and limp. The heat

of her companion could not communicate itself to her. She was hungry, too; but she dared not ask for bit or sup. If Marion could bully them when she wore their old clothes, what could not Lady Ramsay do now she could give them new ones?

“ You might have let me know; for in that case, I don’t think I should have brought Sir James to England. A nasty, fat, tall, big blue-eyed thing ! ”

Sir James was neither tall, nor fat, nor were his eyes big-blue; so the starving listener concluded they had returned to Mrs. Vivian.

“ Well there, don’t apologise. Go and dress, and we’ll have the news after dinner. There are two men coming to dine—Cheesy Vidal, and young Mr. Gunn, a darkie. Cheesy (his name’s Chesterton, only he’s a pet of mine) will sit by me; and you can talk to Mr. Gunn, he is very hard of hearing. I feel as if I could kick the table down. I hope you don’t think my face looks too red ? ”

As though Lucy dared.]

“Sir James is to be back. You must make his toast-and-water, and give him his tapioca. I wish he wouldn’t have that basin on the table, gurgling up his spoonfuls ; it reminds me of the Channel, and makes one sick.”

“How is he, Marion ?”

“Never mind how he is ; I only know that I am very ill indeed, trembling like an aspen leaf.”

There was a deal of electric fluid in that aspen leaf which had not run off yet.

And Vivian thought of that bright and dazzling creature, that meteor-like had risen on his path to dash him down to ruin.

He judged her very kindly. She had, of course, taken his fancy, and he admired her still ; yet there was a set unchanging look in the face that told of hardness and levity increased. Her figure was much improved. She was plumper, rounder, and even more attractive than when she was a girl. Yes ; Marion was handsomer than ever. It was he that was changed—yes ; by that softer, gentler thing, by such shadows made tender !

who had been his dear companion now through his last three happy months. He used to like to hear his old chums call Marion “game for everything;” was proud of her brave and graceful horsemanship, her hits at the bull’s-eye, her rowing on the river; but now he felt that the girl who was “game for everything” was not the girl for him. Then how harshly grated those words: “I shall have to fling him overboard ! ”

He had the highest regard for his colonel, and could only forgive himself the past by remembering that he was scarcely conscious of what was passing round him when he knocked the old man down; further, the cruel heartlessness that could coolly allude to such depths as Miss Blaster’s slander had hinted at, perfectly shocked him, as I said—

“ It had set, and for ever, the bright star of his early love ! ”

CHAPTER X.

HE left Marion at the Albion Hotel, turning towards the West Cliff. Coming from the station he met Colonel Ramsay. Had he wished to have avoided him, he could not, for he called out “Vivian!” and held out his hand. Vivian helped him from the cab, and the two stood together at the gate of the Old Steine Gardens. One pair of sad and straining eyes were fixed upon them now. The contrast struck terror into poor Greta’s heart. The one a tottering, ailing, hirpling old man, eyes dim, skin wizened, and back bent; and at his side her own Grantley—Marion’s Grantley, on whose broad brow her rosebud lips had left a kiss within that very hour; her own Grantley, Marion’s Grantley, with those deep eyes

beaming, that tall form towering, the very embodiment of early manhood's graceful strength, and she thought with a sigh,—

“Look on this picture, and on that.”

She thought of her mother. Marion would look on it and be lost. No, God forbid! Her Grantley must be saved. She could save him—save them. And this is how, monomaniac as she was, she sat about it. She got hold of the last new *Bradshaw*, marked the train to Newhaven, then the boat to Dieppe; and there, beyond the seas, for the time the Ramsays were in England, she determined to transport her husband. He had always longed to take her to Paris, to “shock his little Methody.” She should propose his going there now; accompany him she could not, devoted to him as she was, pledged, as she felt herself to be, to his well being. Still there was enough of the aggrieved and loving woman in her to make her feel that drawing-room scene very painfully. She was, as we have seen, entirely unconscious of his fond passion for herself.

Still hugging her one preconceived notion, that at the very time he married her he loved Marion Lisle, she had looked for possible trouble, but it was afar off. Now it had come so soon—such a sudden blow upon her. Was it always to be thus, her strange life tempest-tossed and sorrow-shaded?

“Must she ever thus from childhood’s home
But see her fondest hopes decay ?”

Yes, this deep trouble had come, and she felt sure that another was awaiting her that demanded all her fortitude, common sense, and self-control. She had not told him yet, but she knew that the long line of Castle Vivian was to be continued from their godless bridal through her harassed self.

Poor girl, she went up and packed his little valise, &c., sighing as she looked at the many little clevernesses of the necessities of his armed days he had shown such ingenuity in contriving, and tears filled the big blue eyes as she thought of that “lang syne” from which she was now driving him away, and many a happy thought came up linked with their three wedded months. She asked

herself if he could so charm and so enthrall the woman that he did *not* love, oh, how could *she* resist him, the woman that he *did*?

Vivian had almost unconsciously strolled far on to Rottingdean, hardly able to realize the events of the last hour. Of course, we know all he thought of was Greta, and yet he shrunk from explanation. Flinging the blame upon a woman seemed to him cowardly; it was like a big, broad-backed fellow shifting the caning on to a little boy. And yet he must explain. He was beginning now to pay dearly for his ruse, for he felt sure that the love she had thought dead within her had sprung up again for him. Her marriage was no godless bargain now, and his had never been, though he was determined to win her, and he had told a lie when he said "he did not love her, and did not ask her love." A tender kindness, and what she called a worshipping grace, was all she credited him with, and she blushed for the weakness that had allowed these so to enslave her. She was, however, possessed with the idea that

it was her mission to save him, and that God would avert this dreaded blow.

At last he came back, this poor hunted hare, stumbling over the packages in the narrow passage, directed Grantley Vivian, Esq., passenger to Dieppe, *via* Newhaven. He entered the room, and again a woman's arms were flung round him.

“Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. Grantley, my own love, fly from temptation, and God will deliver you from evil. If you remain here, respectability and honour both will be lost. Say no more; I have nothing to forgive. I only wish we had parted on our wedding morning, as I proposed. It was, as I said to Julia, a mortal sin that I committed in marrying you, when I knew you loved another.”

She could not battle with her choking tears, and here she stopped.

“Is the world gone mad, dear wife, or is it I that am crazed? Loved another when I married you! There is a bee in your bonnet, little one. Come, my darling, you are not

well ; you have overwalked. There, lie quietly down on the sofa, and let me right myself, if I can. You must indeed have been surprised to meet Marion, and to meet her thus. I feel excessively sheepish and cowardly even in saying thus much, for I have an honest man's horror of 'kiss and tell.' But for my part, there can be no telling, for there was no kissing. You saw her kiss me ; but be fair to me, my angel wife, did I try to take her kisses back again ? "

" Understand me, dearest, once for all. I have no word against your early love. Nay, at the eleventh hour I would have resigned you, whatever it had cost me, for I knew Sir James was old and feeble, and might die, and that I was young and strong, and must live."

He smiled to think how exactly similar had been the conclusions of the false flirt and the true wife.

She continued :—

" And that was what I meant, Grantley, upon my wedding-day, when I said you

might live to curse the hour when first we met, and on my bended knees I prayed forgiveness for our godless bridal in which there was no love."

"No love! You stab me to the heart, Greta. God is my witness, Julia could tell——"

Suddenly he stopped.

"But I will not talk to you now; you are sorrowful and sensitive, and all I should say to you after Marion's visit would seem to you but mockery and make-believe. And yet, you will take my word, I was as innocent as an unborn child of her presence in Brighton; and she, thoughtless, silly girl, had never heard of my marriage, nor dreamed of such a thing, when in her red-hot haste she ran in."

"I do believe you, Grantley; but fly danger, or a voice tells me harm will come. Remember:—

'The old love rekindled
Outburns all the rest.'

"Sometimes, dearest girl, it may. Two

young hearts are parted solely from love of the world's pelf. The 'girl marries an old man whom she loathes, bearing about with her a still loving heart, an unfading memory. They meet. There, alas,

‘The old love rekindled
Outburns all the rest.’

Or, *vice versa*. A poor fellow out at elbows, in the very jaws of a jail, to save himself, weds a flabby, vapid, stupid heiress, whose very presence at his side is a nausea. Why did they not give him time to reform—to redeem the past, that he might yet be worthy of that sweet beauty his soul longeth for. Then comes the broken vow, the wife forsaken, and

‘The old love rekindled
Outburns all the rest.’

But never, believe me, Greta, is there any rekindling of such a love as mine. No fire will ever light again from the embers that treachery, greed, and heartlessness quenched. Now, have I stilled that horrible voice that is always telling you something dreary, and,

like Miss Celia Blaster, slandering me? I hate the voice as much as I did the voice of the sluggard in my Dr. Watts' days. Now I am sure, Ladybird, I have convinced you that there is no rekindling such embers; but there must be an immediate unloading of my traps. Hark, how the rain is pattering against the panes, hear how the sea is roaring! It is not a night to turn a dog out, much less your wedded lord. Now, Greta Vivian, to your quarters, unload my kit, while I pull off my boots."

When he came into that room, he had no more idea of leaving her, than he had of sailing for China. He was very, very sorry for her. She was not one to laugh away so flagrant a breach of propriety, but to find her so sorrowful, in such terrible earnest he never dreamed of.

Bathed in tears, she continued, à la Dinah.

"Grantley do not jest, trust in God, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. Had you been reared in sorrow and shame, as *I* have been, you would have the same overwhelming dread of evil. Oh, what

is life worth when every good man's hand shrinks from you? Each woman's face is turned away? Even though in all else your life might be as pure and spotless as Walter Jocelyn's was; for he was honest, liberal, kindly, yet the one taint clung to him, and Pertun could gibe, and Fitz-Flash could sneer, and yours would be a yet deeper sin, for our godless bridal pledged you to another. Oh, what is life with honour gone? as poor Effie Deans says, 'Oh wherefore tyne life, where tint is gude fame?' Grantley—fly; by all the tender kindness of the last three happy months that we have spent together; by your own horror of those dark days in India, when you drifted from the Lord; by the old name of Vivian, that dishonour never touched; I implore you to fly. Grantley, my own dear husband, 'Thou shalt not commit—'

The horrible word was smothered in her sobs; then again she became articulate—

"I could bear all things, do all things, for the man whom, with God's blessing, I am pledged to save; but, oh, I could not

live again through the shame of Everley Honour."

On her knees she fell before him, quite unnerving him ; the very intensity of her one idea giving an almost inspired and prophetic tint to her words ; and Vivian felt that to withstand her now might be the upsetting of a brain overwrought, so that *that* night, at all events, he saw he must give way.

"Greta," he said, "though there is not one particle of justification for your mistrust, not one spark remaining of the old love you so dread to see rekindle, I will go."

Smiling, he kissed her. She looked pained as he added,

"And you shall go with me dearest, to the 'plaisant pays de France.' "

"No, I must not cross the Channel now. I am a wretched sailor, and this is wintry weather ; I will go quietly on to poor mamma, and then home to Castle Vivian."

Indeed, had she been fit for travelling just at present, she would have felt uneasy at Vivian's side, for to her jaundiced eyes it had seemed very, very sweet the kiss that

was not hers ; she underrated her own rich surpassing loveliness exactly in proportion as she exalted the bright and sprightly creature who had first filled his heart. When their bargain was struck she felt she could be a good wife to Grantley ; but, oh that cold perfunctory personage, a good wife, doing her simple every-day duty, she could not be to Grantley now, for his three months of tender charm had spread such an altar of roses round her she had begun first to hope, then to believe, that she might yet be first and fairest, best and dearest. *Alas ! alas !* she could recal the downright slights that she had borne from a man who slighted none beside ; the rough avoidance and averted glance, and, throughout this time, it had also been her fate to hear the fierce diatribes, and the bitter maunderings, that showed how he still lamented his irrevocable past, aye, and the very words with which he won his wife—“ *I do not offer you my love,*” carried a sharp arrow dipped in gall, that cut her to the quick. In this he never had deceived her. Then his deadly words upon her wedding

morning ! and now—her bright glance misleading, her fond arms entwining, her sweet lips caressing—he had met Marion Lisle ! ! She had the drama of their dark future before her in the shame of Everley Honour ! If ever she was to be the shield between him and hell, she must not fail now. It was some time yet before the night train started, he sat down to the piano as he always did in the evening, and tried to sing her grief away.

“ If to love thee too sincerely, be a fault in me,
Thus to use me so severely, is not kind in thee,
Fare-thee-well, my bonnie lassie, lassie, fare-thee-well,
Time will show thee, bonnie lassie, more than words
can tell.”

It was in vain,—till now, her face had but the warning pious look of that young Dinah he loved to compare her to. She spoke as to a sinner who was flying from the wrath to come, but now it bore a look of hurt resentment, and into her voice came the bitter querulousness, which, with her, was always the mark of utter misery. It was the tone that had first caught his attention, when she took leave of Miss Ellen

Jocelyn, to get into the “Tally-ho ;” yes, her voice had pierced his heart even before her blue eyes did. Since then he had reviled, scouted, almost cursed, and yet, how passionately he loved her. Her spell seemed not of this world. Her magic was not the power of darkness, but it was equally mesmeric.

“Grantley, you are gulling me. On your honour, promise you will not return until I send you word that Sir James and Lady Ramsay have sailed for India.”

Her earnestness gave a solemnity to her words, that made him helpless in her hands ; still he tried to parry it.

“Ladybird, you are hounding a poor fellow out for fear of Lady Ramsay. Do you think I shall sleep one wink in my berth to-night, leaving you within a hundred yards of Sir James ? Greta, on your honour promise me that you will go at once from Brighton, and not return until Sir James Ramsay sails for India ? ”

All would not do, he forgot she had a Scotch father, and could not take a joke.

Now she knew time was pressing — she brought out his travelling cap, rug, and ever so many etceteras, sandwiches, brandy for sickness, sherry for health, and with many a sigh flung round him that old artillery cloak on which they used to sit together on fine mornings by the beach.

The cab drove up, the train must be met, and Grantley Vivian, Esq., passenger to Dieppe, *via* Newhaven, must be off.

She had gained her point—it was he who now began to feel the pain of parting.

“ Well, Greta, I will go only to prove how dear you are to me. But understand me, that after Christmas, if they are not off, you are to come out to me. The next quiet six weeks after you have seen your mother, spend at Castle Vivian. I shall write to Julia, my never-failing friend, and she will convince you of what, just now, I cannot hope to do—that solemn truth, so help me, God, namely, that I have loved you madly since the night that first we met.”

She felt that it was her turn to cheer him now, and the Allegra pervading over all,

lightened up her relieved and thankful face ; and shaking her head with a smile, she said,—

“ Grantley, I have sat at the feet of dear old Bab, and she used in her deep warning voice to grunt out, ‘ Never heed him, Greta ; he can talk any one out of their seven senses, that vile Vi—he has an oily tongue, that man.’ ”

Then softly blushing, she continued,—

“ I shall write first to you, dearest. Where shall you stop ? ”

“ Well, at Rouen. I delight in the old splendid churches, and the manufactories are interesting ; but you can have nothing to say so soon, Ladybird—let me write first.”

“ No, Grantley, you must hear from me.”

It was a fearful night, but she stood in the doorway, as he kissed his last farewell, and watched him past the “ Albion,” round the corner.

Poor fellow, he had done her bidding, and

was gone. Strange, that another life was left with her never once occurred to him !

He had given her a cheque, which to Greta seemed untold gold ; and she promised, after seeing her mother, to come to Rendale, and then go to Castle Vivian.

C H A P T E R X I.

BUT Dinah's mission was but half-fulfilled —there was the Hetty, bright and brilliant moth, still fluttering near a dangerous fire.

She did not do Vivian justice, for it never entered into her modest thoughts, that any woman could, unsought, thus take a man by storm. Her poor Grantley must surely have made some sign—the still smouldering old love had fired him into some momentary imprudence; however, he was safe, and when he once had her letter, he would do nothing to vex her, and so would not return.

She might have let it rest, but truthful and straightforward, she felt a warning word in season, “ how good is it ! ” She knew that as a young wife in England, such a

course as Marion's must lead her into peril ; others would blacken and malign the thoughtless woman—she, rival though she was, would be the one to caution her.

Hers was a strong steadfast nature, though *bornée* ; she had passed a placid night. First, upon her bended knee she thanked her God that Grantley was beyond the siren's song. To look upon that soft, full form—that calm, unruffled face—it seemed impossible to believe in the passionate grief that had convulsed her not four-and-twenty hours before. She asked to see Lady Ramsay alone.

“Lady for Lady Ramsay alone,” sounded the bass ; “Lady for Lady Ramsay alone,” thrilled the tenor ; while the voice that was breaking whispered her in. She entered.

Stretched on a little couch lay Marion : Cheesy, the pet, toadying her ; Lucy, the fag, toadying the poodle. Marion frowned them out ; Cheesy beautifully remarking, as his coarse glance fell on Greta, “What a stunner !” Luckily this loud word did not pierce poor Gunn's tympanum, for the dark man was a gentleman, though the fair one

was not. But neither did Marion's glances or noddings catch his dull eye: so he stayed on. Now Marion wanted no auditors for her meeting with the "nasty, tall, fat, big blue-eyed thing :" so, as she could not pierce Gunn's tympanum, she trod on his toe, and then the darkie disappeared.

Marion made no effort to rise or move, but assumed an injured look, as though Vivian had jilted her, instead of the reverse. Greta remained standing; she did not falter; truth to tell—a sinner to save—an old man to preserve from the scorn of a great scandal—gave this Western Dinah "voice."

But I will not take down her sermon; though my young Methody was anything but a fashionable preacher, her discourses greatly resembled his—there was a great sameness in them.

Marion gazed up at her insolently, yet admiringly. Greta, in her simple wrapping-gown, made no great impression upon the modern belle; but Mrs. Vivian, richly attired in exquisite taste, was quite another creature. And had not her vanity been, ay, even

beyond the inordinate vanity of most, she should have known too much of Grantley not to feel that, wedded to that woman, he could love none besides. Still her amazement was great, as the simple-hearted missionary, after serious exhortations on levity of life, and God's judgments thereupon, finished with,—

“If I have intruded, you must forgive me, Lady Ramsay; for, oh remember that Grantley, though your lover, is my husband!”

Marion's metallic eyes glistened with triumph, as she said to herself,—

“A wife—tell another woman *that!*”

She stared at Greta as we should do were the great megatherium to come to earth again.

“Your lover, and my husband! What! beauty without vanity, a rival without bitterness? Impossible.” And Marion concluded to Lucy,—

“She is a great deal too fat, a great deal too tall, and her eyes are a great deal too big; but Granty's wife is not so *ugly* after all.”

Now the horses were waiting, and she must be off to the Devil's Dyke with Cheesy. Let us hope she'll get no farther towards him than his dyke. She was in glorious spirits. Poor old Sir James was packed for a fortnight to come in wet sheets at Malvern, drenched externally and internally with that cruel cold water, so that his heir and his widow expectant both went up in the market. Old Sir James, dripping at Malvern, seemed as good as done for ; so the creditors held back their hands from the Sir James who should reign in his stead. Cheesy seemed so sure of the widow that his clamorous duns were quiet too, now that poor old Ramsay was dripping with the Malvern waters. Yes, Marion was triumphant ; for somehow things get wind, even through the keyhole, and poor dear demented Dinah's phrase, "Your lover and my husband," was intensely gratifying ; for she was convinced that "Granty" had beaten a retreat from her all-conquering charms.

She put her small foot in Cheesy's hand to get into her stirrup, and went off at full



gallop to the Devil's Dyke, while the "heavies," Darkie and Jumpfort, trotted slowly behind.

Meanwhile Greta went home to write the letter to Rouen, according to promise. Of course, she began to torture herself with needless fears. Would he be pleased? The name of Vivian was as old in Ravendale as that of Ptolemy in Egypt; the pure blood of the Vivians was as blue as that of Hapsburg or Hohenzollern; and she said to herself,—

"How will he like *his* child to be the child of a poor man's daughter?"

She determined to be in time for the two o'clock post, and went with her letter herself to the head office in Ship Street for the greater safety. He would be that very night in Rouen, and to-morrow he would call for it. She did not put her address, "Old Steine," simply "Brighton;" and signed herself, "Greta."

And now for the one to poor mamma, for dear papa to meet her at Warminster. She was not afraid of her mother's displeasure.

To have sent him from sin was a good wife's duty, thought the Magdalen. She, like Greta, had no second idea on the subject; forgetting that "where there's a will there's a way," even across the Channel; and that the next tide to the one that took the husband over might bring the lover back. Love laughs at locksmiths, and, wider still, at jealous wives. Lady Lansfeldt, of course, condemned poor Vivian as a very unsteady fellow, giving as her reason that he had been so good to her. She had, both from Greta and Miss Bab, heard of Marion Lisle, and of all the sorrow she had caused; and the kiss which she told her husband Greta had seen with her own eyes, would not have been the last. Lansfeldt was, extremely angry, and thought it a most foolish piece of business; but Mary Bell was, as "mother and Mrs. Fibber" declared, of a family of witches, and he was soon talked over, and agreed to drive to Warminster to meet his favourite child.

A day or two after came a letter from Paris giving me a description of the ill-

starred meeting, and his own forced flight. He told me that when he reached Newhaven, the coast was in such a state he dared not put out, remembering that his cousins, the Chesters, had both been lost on just so wild a night: so that not starting till next tide, and time pressing, he never stopped at Rouen at all. He knew his little Methody had said she would write to him there, but her letter could be of no consequence; for he asked himself,—

“ What has she to say? She can have no news. Fact is, there can be nothing in the letter, except to tell me not to take cold, nor break the commandments. I will write the very moment that I get to Paris, and address to Lansfeldt.”

Poor Greta! Her letter never was returned to her, for she could not be traced. Greta of Brighton was as much a difficulty as William of Malmesbury, or Geoffrey of Monmouth, now-a-days would be. His letter went on to say,—

“ Dear Julia, you will think me very extravagant; but I could not rest until I had

got you a Sèvres coffee-set to match the tea-service old Guy brought from Northumberland. The cream-coloured, with the broad crimson band, and the golden heron on it. It is costly ; but, ah ! it is not *priceless*, like, I will not say the friendship, but the affection you have shown to me. Often mad, savage, broken-hearted, I have been almost tempted to my old wild life again ; but with you I felt that my mother and my sweet sister were on earth once more. If my life should be useful, happy, righteous, I shall owe it all to you. I say again, it was not friendship, it was affection that you showed to me, and that, and that only, will save a poor fellow from going to the bad. The so-called serious might cut a fellow dead—nay, far worse, may preach a fellow deaf, they do but spur him on to hell ; but it is a heartless wretch indeed, who will not try to keep straight, while there is one on earth to love him and to sorrow for his sin ! ”

His letter continued,—

“ But though you have mended a cracked-

brained fellow, I should be sorry, dear Julia, if you had his china to mend as well: so, to lessen the risk, I direct the package to you. The heart of gold is for my darling; and, will you tell her, I have committed the sacrilege of entwining a wild lock of Don Juan's with little Methody's, putting both into the locket. She must wear it on her chain; but I dare not say 'It is where I would ever be,' for she would think of my past flirtations with the netting-ball. This reminds me that a young *rigolette* of a girl in a milliner's shop got over me to buy two of the fashionable victorines with cuffs. The sable, mind tell dear old Bab, cost most, and then she will choose it; and say I named the chinchilla for Miss Isabelle myself, as being the *younger* fur. The writing-case is for Sandy, the daft; and the three bits of vanity the grisette rigoletted me into buying, are for Dorcas, cook, and Susan.

"Now if I were a woman what is coming should be in the postscript, being of far the most consequence. You objected, I know,

at the time, to my *ruse* in not telling Greta that I loved : I own now you were right. I took her in her own way, too much by the letter. She had said she could never love again, and I believed her. Moreover, that she never could accept a love that she could not return. What was I to do ? She told us artlessly 'enough, how she yearned to bear a name that would be honestly her own. A good name I could offer her, and that I did. I thought I knew her weakness ; this dear, serious little Dinah would marry me for my salvation. I told a lie—God forgive me—when I said I did not love her, and indeed it is *this* that has preyed so sadly on the cast-down and fitful girl, and of course has led to her terrible mistrust and our absurd separation. But, *chè sara, sara,* we cannot repair the irreparable ; still, thank God, by a merciful chance, I have preserved the abominable diary I kept when I came to Grove Cottage. Greta has my keys, and in my old oak chest you will find those pictures of my darling that were worth

keeping, and a large writing-book torn up in the middle, when a good providence stayed the hand of the destroyer ; there you will find all my detestable bitters, which, when tired of pouring out to you, I used to bottle up in paper. Let my darling taste them all, though it will not be as it should be, ‘sweets to the sweet.’ Let her dub me (if her soft lips could breathe such words), ass, brute, fool,—for I was all three ; and yet I am more than thankful, though I have left but the roll of my faults and my follies behind. Let my dear wife read all, and ‘nothing extenuate,’ and she will find there is scarce a sin in life I may not be accused of, save and except the very one for which I have been banished,—the crime of not loving her.”

He named nothing to me about her letter to Rouen, and I let the matter rest.

He did not want her to remain long at Lansfeldt, and, indeed, her stepfather urged her at once to go to Castle Vivian. Vivian

very much wished that she should introduce her mother for the sake of the four pretty little girls, who alas! as the papers said, were "Lord Lansfeldt's only children." But the father's was the older head, and he knew that not even with the prestige of Castle Vivian could his wife ever be floated on the social sea of life. For all that, she came to Castle Vivian, and blessed God for the goodly heritage he had vouchsafed to her Greta.

Lord Lansfeldt rode over to Grove Cottage. He said that instead of Greta coming to us, Miss Bab and I must come to her. He put her note into my hand.

"The carriage, dear kind friend, shall be with you at twelve o'clock. Papa will give you Grantley's keys; would you bring his old desk, his black and white portfolio, and, if it should have fallen out, a thick writing-book, torn up the middle. Be sure bring *that*. Dear mamma says I have done quite right to send him from temptation, that his

sin would have been on my head, knowing what I knew, and seeing what I saw."

Poor Greta, she would not believe it was a "single," and not a "return" kiss!

"You must come to me, Julia dear, or how shall I face Miss Bab? I seem already to hear her trenchant questioning of you,—

"'Why, what on earth, Miss Dagger, has Greta done with that vile Vi?'

"I suppose she must be told the truth, that he went abroad at my request. How she will talk of being at a man's mercy now! Oh, I feel so down and lonely. Don't fail to bring the desk; I never thought to miss him so. But it is as well he should have gone. I have prayed against my sin,—for idolatry is sin,—and oh, I feared I did not love my God so well as I loved Grantley, and this was to be my chastisement, that he should love another more. I am dying to see you; tell dear Miss Bab to be sure and bring her old rip, then she will be quite easy when she roams our muddy lanes. If you are pressed for room,

you can leave the portfolio and the desk behind, but bring on the *torn* papers, &c.

“GRETA VIVIAN.”

We started next day, Bab with her rip, I with the torn papers—the precious balm for the doubting girl. I was determined to find room for the old portfolio, for in that were her three fancy pictures, and, alas, for such a homely *souvenir*, the blue bag dry and hard !

Then it occurred to me, should not I, his old true friend, try to weed his papers, knowing that he had led somewhat the life of the Zingari, before I showed them his young wife ? All the others were business ones, and contained nothing personal ; there were only the torn ones, and these I had orders to show, besides the diary begun at Grove Cottage,—where I could affirm that his time was passed, even as she who loved him best might wish ; though I should except the cyclones and tornadoes raised by his Indian memoirs,—and these

gales blew the fiercer when Bab the censor
was there to scold, and Dinah the Methody
to preach.

As we drove up to the door I recalled
poor old Bab's laughing fit about King
George's ancient beauties. Alas ! the king
was "The king over the water" now, that
was to have driven us to Castle Vivian !

CHAPTER XII.

Lord and Lady Lansfeldt stood in the hall; Greta ran down the steps. It seemed to poor Jocelyn as though in her prosperity his dearest hopes were realized. I never saw so deep a love as his for the child that was not his own.

The mother seemed calmer and happier than she did at the Honour. I had often remarked to Miss Bab I thought it a marvel that the Colonel could allow her to remain at Everley with all her miserable memories; but the fault was the wife's. She had, as many of our poorest peasants have, a large leaven of popery still remaining in her purer faith. It seems to me that they have never entirely rid themselves of the doctrines either of purgatory or extreme unction. She looked

on each visit to the Swan Lake, with her bowed head and aching heart, as expiatory of the sins she had committed against the brave young man and lovely girl who, by their own hand, met their death there; and she has told me that her only consolation in thinking of Loraine was, that the last words ever addressed to her were those of Mr. Lovell the minister. In her simple way she said,—

“Lady dear, I do feel so happy that even my Greta never spoke to her, and that the last words she heard were the words of the holy man.”

Surely this savours of the old faith. She felt from this her child was saved. It was the thought of her unbaptized children, her still-born sons, that troubled her. She had the strange belief that such spirits roam in trouble and unrest through endless ages; on this is founded the legend of the pixies in Cornwall and Devon. Yes, indeed, Everley seemed to her the purgatory where, by the keen sorrows that so constantly rose up to pierce her, she might expiate here

upon earth some of the sin that would keep her from Heaven.

She looked a very comely Chatelaine as she dropped her forest curtsey, and welcomed us, the "ladies dear," to Castle Vivian.

They began unpacking the boxes, I staying back with Lansfeldt to see the carriage unloaded. I had sent Miss Bab in, for she was an old woman, though a year and a day younger than Izzbull, and it was a winter's day and easterly wind. Carroll, the footman, touched his hat to me, telling me Greta wished to know in which of the boxes Mr. Vivian's black portfolio was, as that was to be carried up and uncorded at once.

"She is half off her head, lady dear, at the thought of seeing you both."

Then she turned to Carroll.

"Carroll?"

"Yes, my lady."

"Your mistress has rung three times for Miss Dacre's black trunk to be carried upstairs."

Carroll thought the ladies had indeed driven her off her head, for his young

mistress had never rung three times before in her life.

Night came. I was beginning to brush my hair, and dear old Bab to take off hers ; our rooms opened into each other, and being both thrifty from our early needs, though Vi was a rich man, and coals in the forest four shillings at the pit-mouth, the nippy old soul would not have the second fire lighted : so she came to sit by mine, there to take off her roof, she said, and to talk over "that girl Greta and that vile Vi," who had run away from his wife "after three months,—only to think, Miss Dagger !" Still, he was not quite so vile, the sable must have cost a mint of money. She seemed to crave some more information about this early divorce.

"Not to be true to a pretty girl like Greta for more than three months ! poor girl, how could she put herself at any man's mercy, even for three months ? She was born to sorrow, as the sparks fly upwards, yet she did not look very sorrowful, either. Well, she was such a pious young creature, only

the angels in heaven to match her, and then to marry that vile Vi."

In fact, she continued,—

"Vi told me, she married him only to save him, and instead of being saved, he was gone ! God help the girl, for it is easy to see there's somebody coming. Well, it's cozy quarters, both for her and the child. I've been feeling the curtains of my bed, silk damask,—would you credit it ? And the bed, down ; and the settlements so handsome,—three thousand a year, I am told. And she's to have when the young scamp goes, linen, silver, pictures, horses, carriages, hounds, and harness——"

Here the chambermaid interrupted her with,—

"Please, Miss Blantyre, my mistress has ordered up the warming-pan, thinking you would like to go to bed early after your long drive."

"So I am, Esther. I'll come directly ; nobody ever had to say that old Blanter kept them waiting. Good night, Miss Dagger. Indeed, my good girl, your mistress is so kind

and good, always thinking of others, never of herself."

And Bab tramped off, hair in hand, as Greta glided in in her wrapping-gown.

"Never thinking of myself, dear Julia ! Why, I have been thinking of nothing but myself ever since I said good night; and as to dear old Bab, if I did think of others it was of how long she would be taking her hair off, and when Esther should bring up the warming-pan."

Here the young divorcée laughed heartily, and Bab would have said, "She was at no man's mercy now, and that was the reason."

"Julia, you can guess what I have come for; the dear old portfolio and the bundle of papers. Dear mamma came in to kiss me, and thinks I am fast asleep; but, oh, I could not close my eyes until I read my Grantley's papers. I went for the old portfolio, begging her not to sit up late. Here old Bab came back again,—

"I've dropped one of my braids, Miss Dagger. What, Greta, not in bed yet? I

don't mind you, dear child ; I'm not like Izz-bull, she's ashamed of her false tiling. Put down that fellow's desk,—before I'd fash about him. Thank God, I'm at no man's mercy. You must have been forsaken to marry him ; plague take him and all other men, say I. How I warned you, Greta. Well, never do it again. Good night. Put the guard on for fear of the sparks."

These were the sparks of fire, of which she was as much afraid as of the other sparks, called human.

She certainly was forsaken now, but she was not going to do it again.

She bore up bravely adding, *à la* Dinah, that "her temporal widowhood was his eternal salvation." I did not begin on this long matter ; I merely said,—

"Don't sit up late, my darling ; and if you do, don't let your fire go down."

"Oh, I must finish them, and I have got a nice cup of tea."

"Then put a sip, just a touch of brandy in it, child : the wind is in the east, my teeth chatter," said Bab.

So dear old Bab thought she would chatter no longer, bolted her door, and cuddled into her soft down bed. Then the happy girl kissed me gaily.

“They tease me sadly, Julia, about my Grantley running away, but I sing with Claribel,

“I smile, and I tell them to let me be,
For I know that my Mark will be true to me.”

Going past her room, seeing the light in the doorway, her papa was quite alarmed.

“Not well, my dear? I’ll send Carroll for Dr. Hurd, the first thing in the morning.”

Then the mother, crooning out like a hen over her chickens, was coming to her.

“Oh don’t you trouble, mother dear, it is nothing very bad, and I can cure myself.”

It was nothing very bad, and she did cure herself; for she found how dearly she was loved when she read her Grantley’s papers.

CHAPTER XIII.

I, GRANTLEY VIVIAN, of Castle Vivian, in the county of Ravendale, do maintain, in spite of nearly seven thousand years' statement to the contrary, that woman is the devil,—ay, the very devil. Let old Lucifer hide his diminished head. Woman is the Princess of Darkness; a very queen,—yea, a very queen of subtlety, malignity, frivolity, and faithlessness. Who could contradict me? Could Solomon? Did not his thousands almost drive the wise man mad? Was not Job's wife sorer than all his boils? Did not Xanthippe break poor Socrates's head? and beautiful Mary make away with her long lad? Ay, from scorching Greece to freezing Scotland; from the gardens of Academus to the kirk of Field, who will show me one good wife? Did not

Cato declare—ay, and not the Censor either—‘that if the world were free from women, men would not be without the converse of the gods.’ Likewise hath not Cicero said, ‘Many motives will urge men to one crime, but that one passion will impel women to all crimes.’

“Let them be anathema maranatha! Let my right arm be withered if I clasp her, and my eye darkened if I cast it upon her; let my last gasp overtake me if her soft breath fans my cheek, and my heart beat its last if it beats for a woman again!

“Why should these old thoughts come upward now? Did not God speak to me through that sad voyage with poor Dacre’s dying lips? Should not Julia’s sore need of a friend’s aid and sympathy drive this selfish savagery away—drive the very devil out of me? No, she has come into me again, since, God help me, I met Miss Jocelyn at the Tally-ho—that touching face, those melting eyes, that piteous and heart-broken voice! What a fool I am, I’ll think of her no more; of course she’s a hum—

that tenderness to Julia all a bit of acting ; it was so becoming—such a contrast, too, both to the trailing sloven and the monkey thing, the other inside passengers ; they are not half so dangerous. But the last, the little strutter with the turn-up nose and high cheek-bones was true to her nature, and turned from poor Julia in her deep distress, looking up to a man supposed to be a rich man's heir, and spurning an unassuming and sorrowful woman supposed to be nothing besides. I must be shy of this sweet Penserosa.

“ Laid the poor old miser in his grave to-day. Dear Julia sadly hipped, but we must expect it ; Dacre was a fine fellow. However, it is clearly my duty to remain with her at present ; indeed, some right-hand man she must have, and none could be so acceptable as one who had seen her through her deep sorrow. Here I must stay, and see all right and straight ; but hang it, who should meet me on the very doorstep this morning but this infernal Penserosa ! I must fly away from this enchanting

girl, she will be a dear comfort to poor Julia. How can I be so selfish as to grudge a comfort to one who has been such a comfort to me? God will preserve me. I will resist the devil, and won't call at the Honour; but the worst of it is, in these steep countries the hills are so close upon you, I can see her as she runs lightly down the steps, her wild curls waving beneath her garden bonnet as she plays with those little romps, her sisters.

“ Dear Julia, delighted with all old Guy's romance about the Heron Height. There is, I suppose, a soft corner in the hardest—there was many a one in me in days gone by. Thank God, I'm all flint now. What a mercy there are no pretty women here! Poor Mrs. Pertun, yellow, or what they call here enjoying bad health—it is the jaundice she enjoys. Tierça Prime, divine, and not devotional. Unlike her neighbours, she is of mixed colours: neither self nor raiment quite clean. Patty, only wanting the frill and chain, is a monkey. Her colours are national—red, white, and blue. Mrs. Prime,

as she should be, a sheep of All Bells. Mrs. Ritus, of the flock of St. Cellons. Our only endurable folks are our neighbours, Miss Blan-tyre, and dear old Bab by the name of Blan-ter. What's in a name? She smells as sweet, for she always scatters the fragrance of hearty kindness around her. No; there is nothing to fear. O'Drawls, M'Wearys, and Fitz-Flashes, are very black and very brown, and not so very fair. 'Tis only Miss Jocelyn I must set my guns against, and fortify the citadel as well as I can. I can always lock myself in my painting-room when I hear her, even if that impudent little Susan did not cry out, 'Here's Greta a-coming!' How I do detest their calling her 'Greta,' when even old Viletton, the milliner, they call 'Made-moiselle;' and their 'She's no better nor we, her mother not so good as our'n.' (Too true, little Susan, much worse!) "And yet I could not picture that cheating, ugly, old Mrs. Scapegrace, the mother of Miss Jocelyn. I must give Susan a shaking some day when she is 'cleaning' me. I did

cut a switch one day in the Honour to give her a switching ; but bethought me, the Scapegraces are horribly low Radicals, and I should figure before the Ravendale public in ‘Unpardonable Outrage of a Bloated Aristocrat !’ and this would not very well agree with the ‘Pious Liberality of Grantley Vivian, Esq.,’ so often paraded in that journal.”

“ This is an idle morning. I was very busy yesterday with Susannah and the elders. Sketched some ornamental bookshelves for Susannah for the girls’ schoolroom, and went over Miss Dacre’s building accounts with the elders. Lunched with Wasper and the minister at Jerusalem Larches. Very humdrumming. Whenever you lunch at Wasper’s, at Jerusalem Larches, you are bound to sup at Waxall’s, at Jehorum Falls. There is always good entertainment *on* the table, but none *around* it. His silent beauties just fill a chair, and take no pains to please you. When you look at them, they look away ; when you talk to them, if they listen, they never show that they do. One approving glance they never give, one pretty word they

never say. Susannah calls them 'superior, amiable, valuable girls.' Such they have been, *depuis longtemps*, and superior, amiable, and valuable girls they will be, *à jamais*. I may safely go sketching at the Jehorum Falls. The view is magnificent. I may safely go there. There is no more danger to a poor fellow from these valuable girls than there would be from those two old learned ones, Elizabeth Carter and Hannah More, if they were yet in the flesh. No; I can safely sup at Jehorum Falls, as safely lunch at Jerusalem Larches; but I'll go not to the Honour. I'll not break bread with Greta; with me she is trying the humility dodge. When she looked up at me with those beseeching eyes to introduce her mother, I felt like a fool—am afraid I looked it. Julia seemed so pleased. Showed Julia all my sketches. She agreed with me, the Venus was the best. Cruel and impossible to tuck that sweet figure into armour. Shall order frames for Joan and Britannia, and give them to the ladies; they will so brighten up Mrs. Fibber's dark parlour.

"Miss Jocelyn's sweet voice again! I

must resist her, and she will flee from me. I can always run behind my fortress—my easels, when I feel that she is coming, or cut through the garden door, as Bab calls it, ‘like a coward, with my coat-tails flying.’

“I must use my ugly word again. Yes, I am a fool. I turn from the girl, and then keep growling because she makes nothing of me. ’Tis so hard to call her false, so brutal to judge her sternly, when we think of her cruel fate—so young, so innocent, so sorely tried. But, then, she is a woman, and, of course, a hum. I am rather glad old Bab told her I’m a bit of a scamp. She raises those sweet eyes, and her voice full of feeling cries, ‘Oh, Mr. Vivian!’ She goes on just like Dinah, and thinks I do not see her, while I have a full view of her in the mirror, as I sit in old Guy’s chair facing the fireplace. She preaches to me by the hour on sin and sorrow, earth and heaven. The best thing about heaven is that, as the cynic says, there are no women there, even if they could find a priest. Well, I do my best. I turn my

back upon her, though looking at her all the while can't be called resisting her. In fact, there is no resisting her.

“Very busy all last week—the chapel roofed in, and the bridge getting on swimmingly. Dear Julia, thank God, much better, and fonder than ever of her ‘Tally-ho’ friend. Indeed, the girl is another creature. Sometimes a glint of sunshine lights the fair, sad face, and then she is the very personification of the poet’s Allegra. As Penserosa she is an angel, as Allegra—confound her, she is a woman, compounded of the sorceress, the tyrant, the deceiver, the coquette; and these parts make a whole—the devil.

“Now the schools are finished, and the Heron Height garden laid out. Julia so happy in the company of her friends Bab and Greta, while *mes chères amies*, Patty and Isabelle, are equally blessed in mine. I must remember to speak to Julia about poor little Patty. Some ill-principled fellow is playing what we call ‘old gooseberry’ with what she calls her ‘affections.’ Greta preaches, too, about the little ape. I really don’t wonder,

as she is always about with me; but there must be some other fellow who has got hold of that thumping heart of hers.

“Julia has been urging me to make at once for Castle Vivian. I hate the thought of it. I was never made for a rich man. There is a world of work in me. Why did the *Stormy Petrel* sink—why were the Vivian Chesters drowned? Could I but have controlled myself, I might have made way. Even now I should be happier as a photographer or travelling artist than yawning time away as the lord of Castle Vivian.

“Wish I could make all my money over to my Duff cousins, Bell and Bessie. Their mother was a Vivian, and it would be keeping it in the family. Blood’s thicker than water, and the bad blood between relations thickest of all. Still I loved those dear girls, knew them in my better days, when I believed in women. Aunt Duff, too, was always as kind, or kinder to me than to the Vivian Chesters, though they rolled in wealth, while I, a wretched sub,

‘Spent half-a-crown out of sixpence a day.’

Aunt Nairne, Old Hecuba, toadied them and snubbed me. Her name was Henrietta. They call her Hecky for fondness, I called her Hecuba for spite. Besides, she was the mother of Cassandra, and I liked to parade my classics before those dull dogs the Chesters. Poor fellows, they are gone! and old Hecuba's slights have done nothing but to prove what the spite of a sub may be. How I did hate that Cassandra, too, with her withering voice, always foretelling my bad end. And then the younger one, that saucy Arethusa, mocking, ay, mocking at my drill. No; Bell and Bessie cried their hearts out when I first went to India,—no hum—for I came back and caught them when I was too late for the train, and they bore up bravely to my face in the morning when I really went away. Oh, why did I not take Bessie then and there? I should then have had a good wife,—at least, I should have thought her so; and have hugged the dear delusion, not having come to the truth.

“ Well, Ernst has my nice little cousin now, aye, and three children—God help him!—

not so very nice. God help poor Bessie, too ; she was pleasant, and, no doubt, like the rest, false as she was fair. All's well. I might have had a hard trial to have turned from a girl I was so fond of when I was a better man. Poor Bessie ! how she used to look up to me ; she could not do so now ! Still, that is no reason why I should be Dinahed out of my life by Miss Jocelyn, or Hectored out of my nerves by Miss Bab. She boasts of being at 'no man's mercy,' why should I be at a woman's ? Well, never mind the old one, it's the young one— 'Resist,' &c., old Bab's deep 'Dagger' can't even scratch me, but oh ! Miss Jocelyn's sorrowful 'Julia,' cuts right to my heart. And then that voice of Dinah, that Methody voice, with those earnest preachments, beginning 'Oh, Mr. Vivian,' and finishing by always telling me what my wages will be, till I, of course, the more delight in defying and shocking her. I only wish she would not be so dreadfully at home ; one cannot exactly be a brute and brush past her as she enters the cottage, but if I

stay, while I am as hot as a capsicum, she is as cool as a cucumber. She says,—

“‘ Let us be brother and sister, Mr. Vivian. Oh, in all our trouble I did so want an elder brother, and I feel as much at home with you as I should with dear Miss Bab.’

“ So I am to be twin-brother to that gruff old man-hater ; well, I am a woman-hater, in that we are twins. No, I’ll be off to Castle Vivian ; this is no place for me ; keep just enough to hold body and soul together. I’ll start photographer ; how ugly I’ll make all the women. There’s truth in a photo as well as in a well—it never flatters. If Bluff Hal could have got the *carte de visite* of the Flanders mare, he would not have been deceived, and would have had to answer for one crime less. What does a bachelor want with money ? No ; mine shall be divided between Bell and Bessie. It will be all right in the succession, too. Aunt Duff is first in the line, senior to Hecuba—that horrid old Hecuba ! Here’s the Bible ; now, let us see. My father’s elder brother was Grantley Vivian, and took

the name of Chester on marrying the heiress ; then comes Isabel Elizabeth, the wife of Gordon Duff, then my father, Harry Vivian, and the fourth of the family was Henrietta, the wife of Maxwell Nairne.

“ There’s that little impish Susan crying, —‘ Here’s Greta a’ coming, Mr. Grantley, but there’s time for you to cut through the garden-door. Never mind what Miss Bab says about “ What a fool you look with them coat-tails flying.” Missus is gone to the Rookery to speak to Mr. Fitz-Flash about his rent. That last very big salmon, and Miss Nelly’s Pottycomaine (I think ’tis that they calls their painted plates) have made her suspigious. Greta, I know, will come in. She allays says,—“ Susan, Mr. Vivian never minds me.” And, indeed, you didn’t ought, and her mother no better, nor——’

“ ‘ The devil ! Susan,’ I said, ‘ do you want the poker at your little skull ? You must never call Miss Jocelyn “ Greta ” to me, any more than you would to your mistress.’

“ The imp replied,—

“ ‘ For my part, Mr. Grantley, I like Greta, and I’ll call her Miss Jocelyn to please you before everybody except mother and Mrs. Fibber ; they’d get waxy ; iss, indeed ! Hark ! there’s Greta a letting herself in,’ and the imp ran off.

“ Never mind me,—confound it, and I am always minding her ! Hark ! I hear Julia. How am I to fight these creatures off ? I do resist them and they do not flee. Just as I was considering my future tactics, a poisonous creature did attack me bodily, a great big wasp stung my temple furiously. I called out ‘ Julia ? ’ Another voice answered,—

“ ‘ Coming, Mr. Vivian. Susan, bring the blue bag ! Miss Bab was cured by the blue bag.’

“ So I am to be cured like dear old Bab !

“ Ah ! that day at the Honour when her poor mother talked of her to me. I grudged those dainty fingers to our poor soldiers ; how I hailed them now, as her gentle pressure applied with her believing face her

homely remedy. Yes, but then she would have been just as gentle to Pertun, as tender to Prime! Then she offered to read to me just as she would take the morning lessons to old Sally Sawle. I could not make for the garden-door to shock the soldier's daughter, who, at this magic hour of the afternoon, would stroll forth with her 'love tale' and her fan, while Bab took her digestive snooze with her tail turned up. No, with my frightful face I was booked for indoors, and, worse still, for Greta Jocelyn. To think of the matter-of-fact young Dinah reading to me, making a brother of me like that! fact is, I would have no such thing. So I sat down to sing to her. I could have sat and sung till morning with those blue eyes up-turning their delighted glance to my swollen face. Was it my fancy, that when I came to

'The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
But that Matilda will not give—'

was it my fancy that she turned away as she would not have turned away from Bab?

Then the two neighbours came in. Miss Bab asked for a cup of tea. I made believe to Miss Isabelle that I could meet any one but herself, but would not for worlds and worlds that her eyes should gaze on my swollen face. Dinah looked sermons at me, Miss Bab and the dear little Methody stayed to tea.

“Greta had come down to consult Julia about Sir John Digby, and like the cool cucumber that she is, begged I would stay and give her my very best advice, just as if, instead of being six-and-twenty, I was six-and-ninety. Then we all fell to talking of love, I saying I did not believe in it. Still, I tore away furiously at poor Julia’s card-basket, that little imp Susan looking stabs at me for ‘a making of such a litter I didn’t ought.’ Ah, little Susan, I, your Mr. Grantley, do many a thing that I did not ought!

“A thought came to me when she said she would marry any one who did not ask her for her love, did not offer her his own. What more easy now I have got my lesson ?

I can see this beautiful waif dreads the publicity of the life at Lansfeldt, passing as Lord Lansfeldt's daughter, when she is but Glendinning's child. Her honest spirit recoils from this sailing under false colours, her modest and tender nature shrinks from the scorn that must come; and she looks to marriage as her only shelter, yet has no love to give. Julia smiles when I tell her this. Can she have seen that look I was puppy enough to think I saw, as she looked up at my swollen face, as I sung my song?

“Have made up my mind not to ‘Resist,’ &c. When I said ‘Good night, Miss Jocelyn,’ she smiled up at me,—

“‘Best not fight off these little venomous creatures, Mr. Vivian, they are sure to get the better of you, and turn round to sting you at last.’

“Was she prophetic, like that horrid Cassandra Nairne, old Hecuba’s daughter?

‘With the blue bag so cooling
She softened the sting;
Will the blue eyes befooling
A sharper one bring?’

“To-night there is to be a juvenile party at the Rookery, and Miss Isabelle is going. Fitz-Flash asked me, saying,—

“‘There is always a knife and fork for you, Vivian.’

“‘So there is, Fitz-Flash, but never a bit to eat with them.’

“I’ll see old Bab; she has known Miss Jocelyn since they brought her an infant to the Honour from the Forest Green. I shall have some hard rubs, and must keep my own counsel. I think the little Methody would marry me for my salvation; and she would prove it too. No use my talking of love to her, spite of dear old Julia’s doubting smile; her very heart seems crushed out, each earthly passion dead within her. She is booked for heaven, and there is no reason why she should not go up from Castle Vivian. She shall not be chained by those cursed, atrocious, unnatural vows, falsely called religious ones; fact is, it is lucky she has taken the active Methody line, instead of poor Tierça’s half-dreamy, half-saved, half-starved Ritualism. I don’t see what Greta’s

line can be, unless she takes to nursing, lay reading, and city missionizing ; all this she can do quite as well at Castle Vivian as in muddy lanes and moping streets. Where there's a will there's a way ; instead of asking her to bless a lover, I'll ask her to save a sinner, so here's for a chat with old Bab in Mrs. Fibber's dark parlour !

“ Just returned, she hailed me with,—

“ ‘ Well, Vi, I s’pose Greta’s come down to Miss Dagger, as you’ve come into me. How vile you must be, Vi, it goes to my heart to see how you scorn and snub that pretty girl Greta. Well, you’re not so swelled up, not such a fright as you were yesterday ; there’s nothing like the blue bag. She is very forgiving. I’d have let you roar till morning before I’d have bathed your puffy cheek, if you had treated me so. She’ll make a sensible woman, now she has given up all thoughts of men. Jocelyn will provide for her. It is lucky she has no fortune, or some of these designing fellows would easily get round her, by telling her no end

of lies about her leading them to heaven, being their salvation, &c.'

" I said,—

" ' Oh, surely nobody could be so base, Miss Bab.'

" ' Tut, tut, I'll tell you what, they have an oily tongue, those men. You have an oily tongue too, Vi, but thank God you hate all womankind, and do not take to Greta. Now good-bye; I must see about the supper. Izzbull is spending the evening with the Fitz-Flashes, and she'll want it to-night, poor woman, she will.'

" I knew she would, and so would not detain her cousin.

" The dear old lady quite confirms my own idea. Miss Jocelyn will marry from religious motives, and for those alone; and the only earthly alloy may be that clinging to protection and respectability which, through her guilty mother's fault, she so sorely needs. As to opposition I need fear none; for it is well known that in answer to any suitors to his two branded girls, Jocelyn had

almost said with Leonidas, 'Come and take them.'

"A terrible to do; wanted to show dear Julia and Miss Bab Castle Vivian, and that bothering old simpleton, Miss Blantyre, declines going without a 'married lady to countenance her.' Tried at Bristol to get Bell or Bessie, but Bell has got a broken bone, and Bessie a baby. Bessie is only twenty-five, and Bell scarce twenty-two. I don't see how they could steady us, even if they were there. I'm sorry. Must be off to Scotland for the grouse and deer-stalking, and then make over my property to Bell and Bessie. Julia will be angry. She says property has its duties, an old, high name claims on our good conduct and active exertion; that we bear the names our fathers bore, and we should not disgrace it. She insists that it is God's will if we are rich; that wealth is a great trust and a privilege. I agree with her; but, fact is, what is one to believe? when my sweet little Methody beats her down 'with the rich man on the camel

going through the needle's eye, and how hard he found it.' No; when Miss Jocelyn takes the vow she talks of, I shall take the poverty vow, and start in the chiaroscuro line."

"My brain must be touched, to think that for one moment I could be acceptable to one so pure and good. Then to read my coxcomb entry that Jocelyn would reply, 'Come and take her ! '

"To-day I saw Miss Jocelyn and her broken-hearted mother off by the coach, on their dreaded road to Lansfeldt. I can stand fire well, and have brooked, when in India—for I felt that I deserved it—much social scorn ; but the look that Greta gave me will haunt me to the grave. Ah, dear girl !

'All my faults, perchance, thou knowest,
All my madness none can know ;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, but with thee they go.'

Yes, and this makes her look of stricken horror more terrible still. What could that letter be ? It has this week's date, and certainly every stroke of my name was written

by me. I could not deny it. But then those words, 'A broken heart's a broken heart, although it is a worthless one.' Surely I have had nothing to do with the worthless here? Then her warning voice always talking of my wages. She certainly, this time, runs them up to a great amount; and my sin, this time, was in that letter. What could I have written thus to distress her? Let me recal. I caught the date; it is this week's. What notes have I signed the last few days? Three answers to invitations. Susannah asked me to an Esquimaux Jersey party, held this week at her house. It is a flannel-stitching meeting for the poor shivery blubber-suckers—a plain work assembly. *That* I wouldn't mind, only the workers are plainer. Refused, and signed myself to Susannah, 'Ever hers, Grantley Vivian.' Surely Susannah's is not a worthless heart, and I have not broken it?

"I declined Mrs. Fitz-Flash's croquet. The air does give me such an appetite, and one can't carry provisions in a coat pocket. One might in one's hat, like a plough-boy,

only that one must now and then make a bow, and then, 'the fall out.' I signed myself 'Ever hers, Grantley Vivian.' No, I never broke her heart, any more than her bread.

"The Miss Wraxalls invited me to sit under the Rev. Glum Nasal, their new minister, who, they tell me, is a more enlightened man than any I have ever met. That's easy to believe; but, fact is, one does not like being sat upon. Signed myself 'Ever theirs, Grantley Vivian.'

"It is mystery of mysteries what my little Dinah means. I have signed one charity paper recommending old Mrs. Sneezer for the hospital ticket, and another, voting Mrs. Purloin into the almshouse, because she had 'brought up fourteen children in the fear of the Lord,' and I was not told till afterwards that four of them had been transported. Mrs. Purloin's might have been a worthless heart, but I could not have broken it.

"I have also a note from old Wasper, asking me to meet mayor and town council. That, too, I signed. Their hearts may be

worthless, but certainly would never break. Besides, I never will go to old Wasper's again. He began before the soup bothering Dr. Phlegm about original sin and the destruction of the world. This lasted till the cheese. Old Phlegm cried, in desperation, 'for God's sake, Wasper, let us introduce some pleasanter subjects.' So Phlegm introduced curvature of the spine and softening of the brain. Then Susannah changed the subject to the crooked ways of the ungodly, and the hardening of the heart. Fact is, I wonder how they get any one to dine with them; or, as Wasper expresses himself, 'to stick a fork into his mutton, and put a foot beneath his mahogany.'

"I will run down to Julia. She is more reticent than Miss Bab. I know she is busy about our great flare-up to-morrow. Susan is madly 'shining of the silver,' Dorcas is 'a-doing of' the glass, Sandy trundling round that infernal knife-grinder — the new blunting machine, cook 'a-trussing' of the chicken. I shall tune the piano and look to the cellar; so we have all lots to do.

“ Returned from consultation. Julia and I differ in toto. But she is all wrong, quite wrong. She says, ‘ no woman, although she is a very saint, likes a man the less for telling her he loves her.’ I said, ‘ but that’s the very reason Miss Jocelyn would not take Sir John.’

“ ‘ No, not Sir John,’ said Julia.

“ ‘ He is so devotedly fond of her, and she cannot so love him in return,’ I replied.

“ Dear Julia was short and sententious, but smiling. Had she been but short and snappy, I should have put it down to the world of work at Todger’s for the grand reception to-morrow night. I got out of all patience, saying,

“ ‘ Julia, you are so monosyllabic I could shake you. Besides, you are all wrong. If Miss Jocelyn marries me, it will be for my salvation. God forbid that I should jest ! If any one can save a sinner, she, that purest angel, could. But let that pass. She knows me for a desperate woman-hater, and believes my heart, in its rage, is steeled against all womankind, as her own, in its

chastened saintliness, is against all human love.'

"' Is it ?' cried Julia, with her doubting smile.

"' Is it ? of course it is. You are all wrong. Let me gang my own gait, and if I could but unravel the mystery of our last meeting, I am sure I shall succeed. I shall be cannie enough to trot out my repentance and keep back my love. Why, if Digby entirely failed by taking the opposite course, how great a fool I should be to follow his lead. She could not accept Digby because she had but gratitude, not love, to give—eh ?'

"' No, not to Digby.'

"' Now I have the shelter both of fortune and position to offer her. Did she not say how she clung to both, provided she was not called upon to mislead or deceive their donor ? I shall tell her I neither offer nor expect anything like love. Julia, Greta Jocelyn is already the light and joy of my life, and I should be a fool indeed not to take the right way of making her my own. Don't

sit smiling there so coolingly, while I—can't you see I am boiling over? Come, I'm right, and you must agree with me.'

" She laughed.

" 'Boil on, dear Grantley, but don't boil too fast, and get hardened and obstinate. I still stand to my text: tell the girl you love her—'

" 'What, as Digby did? The very way to lose her. Had he gone about it in my business way, he would not have been refused.'

" 'He would.'

" 'Come, your reasons?'

" 'I never give my reasons, but always keep my convictions; and I am convinced you will live to regret the course you are proposing. Remember, Greta is no stranger to your love for Marion Lisle. Ask but for time.'

" 'So did Digby. No end of time he asked for. Old Bab said he would wait twenty years. Now I'll not wait for one, and I'll win her first.'

" 'Sir John would never win her, did he

try as long as if his was a suit in Chancery, instead of a suit in love.'

"‘And you recommend me to follow suit? That’s very kind.’

"‘Nonsense, Grantley; the verdict *in re* Vivian might be different to that *in re* Digby.’

"‘Nonsense. If I dared profane her ears by pleading such a love as mine, she would never listen. No, I’ll tell my gentle Methody she was sent on earth to save me, and I believe she was. Yes, it would be no lie, for I believe she was.’

"Julia seems to think that my goings-on with Patty had something to do with the letter and Miss Jocelyn’s distress. I said it could not be. That there is some low fellow misleading the chimpanzee there’s not a doubt: as for me, I’d sooner swallow ten emetics than talk ten minutes to the little fright. I told Julia how often and how late I met her in the Honour by the Swan Lake, and always made a point of taking her safe home, she chattering all the time like mad of Don Juan, false hopes, fond woman, and

watery graves. All Sanscrit to me! No, the letter could have nothing to do with Patty. I always write to Par, and sign myself his 'obedient servant, Grantley Vivian.' No, it is not poor Patty's heart I have broken. I must set all right with my bewildering Penserosa, or she will break mine.

" 'No,' I continued to Julia, 'this sweet girl will be the saving of me, and surely it can be no mockery when I tell her so. Anything else I might say she would not believe, and would refuse me at once. Julia, I cannot tell how it would be with me if I were crossed again. I should so curse myself if I went to the bad a second time, I should cut my throat at once. Since I have stretched my long legs at your happy hearth, and have felt as I did in my better days at the side of my mother and my sweet sister, not even Susan-nah, a Baptist deaconess, has been half so moral, nor Wasper, a water-drinker, half so sober! No; with Greta at my side I shall steer my course worthily, and not disgrace the old race of Vivian, that never

yet turned out a scamp. If I am stranded again, I shall go down to the dogs. Never fear, I will not squander, but shall take good care of Bell and Bessie, and, as the folks say here, "my maiden ants." But them who spited the sub, the sub shall spite. When I have played the part of master of your ceremonies to-morrow night, I will go to Lansfeldt, and will know my fate, for

'The sun that shines above her,
Is far less bright to me.'

Yes, I will go to Lansfeldt, unseemly though it be, and the old lord so ill; but that the colonel will forgive.'

"Suppose I read my precious journal through. I am ashamed of it; full of weak repinings, coarse satire, and, worse than all, profane bluster. Ah, indeed, how can we call scoffing merriment, or self-indulgence enjoyment? No, the calm and serious are the happy, and the self-restrained are the contented.

"I'll tear up this villainous farrago after I have read it; but I'll paper up the blue-bag,

in memoriam, when I came to that blest resolve of making this sweet girl my wife.

“Hark, there’s Susan calling me! What a Jack-in-office the little imp is, to be sure!

“‘Here, Mr. Grantley, is the ’amper from the Castle. Be we to pay it, or be you? Carridge 4s. 8d.; 1s. 2d. paid out.’

“I must lock up my desk. It is the old admiral’s Madeira, for to-night we hold our revelry, and Susan is asking her mistress for a ‘bit of muslin to squeege the jilly through.’

“To think of all that has happened since I opened this! To-morrow is my wedding-day, when

‘Love’s sweet mother, Beauty’s queen,
Linked with a mortal will be seen.’

Not for ten thousand worlds would I have my dear wife see it. It must never fall into Greta’s hands; it would so shock and distress her. Shall tear it up to-night.”

He did not tear his journal up, and it fell into his wife’s hands, and no “good words” ever

brought such life and joy as these, his light and careless ones ; and she thanked her God for the strange chance that had thus preserved this balm to her doubting heart,—her Grantley's honest papers.

CHAPTER XIV.

I WAS not surprised next morning to have a summons from Esther to come up to her mistress the first thing after breakfast. She was not at table. Her mother had been into her room, and told us that,—

“Greta had been, she was quite sure, in dreadful pain all night; her eyes were so red, she must have been crying with it. Indeed, even she was too fond of rushing about, though more careful than most poor girls are.”

I did not feel anxious about the very great pain, feeling sure they were tears of joy she shed; I found her still in bed.

“Oh, Julia, you have made me so happy, I could cry till night to think after all my Grantley loves me. Perhaps I should not

have been so hasty ; but then what would you have done, Julia, to see your own dear husband kissing a prettier girl than you ?”

“ Why in my case, Greta, I should look it over, knowing he could not have found a plainer ; but my husband is still in the moon, so I cannot enter into your feelings. Still I would wait to ascertain if the pretty girl did not kiss him first, before I transported him beyond the seas.”

“ Oh, Julia ! But she never would have kissed him first. What should you or I, or even poor mamma, say to such a thing ? ”

“ True ; but none of us is Marion Lisle.”

“ But she was—oh, so pretty ! My poor Grantley could not help himself. She had—oh, such eyes !—eyes that seemed to look you through and through, and to come out at the back of your head——”

“ If that is the case, I hope when I meet her she will wear blinkers.”

“ Besides,” she said, sobbing, “ he would not allow it was her fault. You know what I mean—did not exactly deny it. Said I

would believe nothing he urged at that moment ; and that he did not like leaving me with Sir James Ramsay so near. How strange of him not to see the difference."

The Scotchman's child could not see the joke !

" Then he laughed and made so very light of me, when, on my bended knees, I prayed of him to remember Everley Honour, and not to sin against his God. Oh, if I had but seen his diary I never should have doubted him ! Yet God will forgive me. You know the magic way he had. It was only me he slighted. Every one was in love with him. Miss Isabelle and poor Patty you do know of, and how they were deceived. Then there was Susannah Wasper of the Baptist Chapel, and Builtha Conway from the Brecon Barracks, Nelly Fitz-Flash, Jane O'Drawl, and Ann M'Weary ; they all were in love with my Grantley, and thought that he loved them. On my wedding morning, Julia, when you were so shocked at my sad face, I heard him say that he would cut his throat if he met Marion Lisle. I shudder to think of

that word 'bargain,' that I said our engagement should be called. I offered to leave him ; telling him that ours was a godless bridal, and that he might live to curse the day we met. He did nothing but kiss, and try to comfort me, looking as if he thought me crazy ; so that the kinder he was, I but thought him the falser ! All is explained now ; but 'twas hard to love him so, and yet to have to doubt him.

"I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll get up ; I never could keep my bed, and I'll come and sit on the sofa in your room ; and I'll not let a post go out without a letter telling him to come home at once, and never to mind Lady Ramsay. That you heard from Mrs. Nip that Sir James and Lady Ramsay are at Malvern, and don't sail for India till the spring. I'll sleep now, dear Julia. Like poor mamma I'm feverish, so shall keep quiet. He has not started. He says nothing about my little baby that is coming. Sometimes I think he will not like his child should be the child of a poor man's daughter. You will see he laughs at my saying I am careful

and keep quiet. One favour, dear Julia, I must ask of you, and that is, if he should not be back, you will come to me in June ; for my thoughts will be wandering towards him, and my mind troubled. And Miss Bab says it was a troubled mind that almost killed poor mamma when Loraine was born ; and if it should go hard with me, I should like the dear friend of my Grantley to be with me if I die. Let me go to sleep upon your sofa ; and if Miss Bab should want to come to the fire to put her hair on for dinner, never mind me.”

And she fell to sleep again ; and, though her face still glistened with her tears, she had never looked so full of peace and joy before.

But whether she woke up or not, I determined to write to Vivian, who, I knew very well, was but waiting for his summons home. Carroll took my letter to post, and brought one for his mistress. It was from Vivian : she read it when she woke :—

“ Well here I am, sweet Ladybird, as dark and dismal as that fusty old fellow in the

sable gear, the Banished Lord at the Royal Academy. Still I do not like starting on my travels without letting you know. I am in many minds. I think of sailing in the *Passing Bell*. You see by the papers she is advertised to start Friday the 12th."

She dropped his letter all aghast.

"Why, Julia, it is such ill-luck to sail on Friday, and then to choose the *Passing Bell*—what a dismal name! Why, there's the *Laughing Ann* goes on Thursday, and the *Rory O'More* the day before. Let's go down the outward bound-vessels; why, the *Passing Bell* is not in the list (of course not)."

Poor girl, she seemed very down. It was to me surprising how in that refined and cultured girl the peasant mother would peep out. There was horror in the very thought of Friday. Then, too, she read it all for gospel—so dense, so opaque, was this fair maid of Perth—Glendinning's child!

"I may make at once to New York, cross to the American prairies, fraternize with the trappers and scalpers; it will be a change

after India, and I shall go down a deal better with the red men than with the yellow. Or it may be southward; Gordon Cumming and Mansfield Parkyns are crying Africa up. I might enjoy outspanning and inspanning as much as the Scotchman, and shall remember, when my skin cracks, to put a pat of butter on my head to melt, like Parkyns. My third route would be to Australia, New Zealand, Norfolk Island, and home by California and Cape Horn.

“What does my little angel mean when she says, ‘I am very careful, dearest’—with three dashes under careful, and not one under dearest—‘and keep quiet?’ Why should you be careful and starve yourself into a mummy like old Mrs. Nip? Why keep quiet when all the world is dying to know Mrs. Vivian? No; go everywhere, dear Greta, and take poor mamma about. I read in *Galignani* that Sir James and Lady Ramsay are at Malvern. See how much more faith I have in you than you in me. To think that Colonel Ramsay is within a morning’s drive of you! In one thing you

have the worst of it,—his wife goes to him,
mine sends me away from her.

“ Well, farewell dearest, I must be off.
Ah, you will repent when you think of me
in the silent sands of the great Sahara, or
freezing in Canada till my nose cracks off,
or knocked down in San Francisco, where
every second man dies a violent death. Oh,
Greta, do you never

‘ Think of him who should caress thee,
Think of him thy love has blest ? ’ ”

She seemed quite serious, and sorely cut up. I felt sure he was still but waiting his recal. He knew his only clearance in her eyes would come from his diary, for that—though his many faults defaced it—would prove his loyalty and love. But still I never dreamed he would be down on us so soon. It was scarcely over six-and-thirty hours after I wrote, when this note was put into my hands, dated “ Ravendale ”:—

“ I have just come, dear Julia, and found all your constabulary force looking out for thieves. As I swung the old gate open

this darkest of dark nights in frosty dark December, Susan was scaling the wall coming from Mrs. Fibber's converzatione, Dorcas reading a book that she offered to lend me, calling it 'The Cottage on the Clift,' saying she was sure I should like it, it was so 'harrupping.' Cook was making mince-meat, and Sandy off to the 'Wrestlers' 'arter the beer.' Susan cried out,—

“ ‘Don’t be frightened, Dorkiss, you greet silly thing, it’s our Mr. Grantley; them’s his dear dark mustyshoes.’

“ And so we all met again.

“ I am dying to surprise my Ladybird, and will beg of you to order Carroll to bring the dogcart in for me directly you receive this: so good-night! ”

I sent Carroll in, but not without a premonitory note, for his joking letter had really upset the poor girl. I explained to him as well as I could that he would not be the last of the Vivians, and that the greatest precaution must be shown in breaking his return to his young wife.

Carroll started. Greta had really been

very much excited, the more so as she felt very vexed at the silly one-idea'd part she had played. She always led the subject back to him when she talked to me,—

“To think he should sail in the *Passing Bell*, and on a Friday, too! Why will you smile, Julia? You do provoke me so. He never will come back—never! never! never!”

“Come, you’re never going to sing ‘Rule Britannia,’ dear. You must be quiet.”

“He never will come back” (I was terror-struck at the anguished look she gave), “for he will never sail!”

Here her mother brought her in a narcotic that Dr. Hurd had prescribed. It had a very strange, and, as I thought, a very unsatisfactory effect upon her. It seemed to drowse and deaden her body quite to stupefaction, yet left her spirit still on the alert. Her pulse was high, and she pushed back her heavy weight of curls. We laid a snow-white downy coverlet over her, and loosened her wrapping-gown. To all appearance

she was fast asleep. And now I heard his well-known voice. I begged of him to be quiet, saying I would come up with him, and that at all events he should have a look at her. He trod as softly as a woman; advancing, he bent to kiss her well-loved cheek, and then at my warning went to the other part of the room, where she could not see him.

I heard a rustling.

“Julia,” she said, “I have had a vision of my Grantley; a voice tells me that he is coming home, and that God has forgiven me. But oh, why was he silent when I wrote to him at Rouen? Oh, he will not like his child to be the child of a poor man’s daughter! ”

I gave him great credit for his self-restraint, for he still held back; but the same thought came to us both, the extreme resemblance to his picture of which he was so proud. There were the large blue eyes upturned to her God, in the same way the one hand held back the heavy hair, the wrapper had fallen from the softly moulded

neck, while the white arm cleft at the snowy coverlet, as the rising figure at the crested spray.

It seemed to strike his conscience, had he not turned from her—fought her off—doubted and distrusted her—feeling all the while that

“There were none of beauty’s daughters
With a magic like to hers.”

He sat down at the bedside; again she fell back as one dead; the narcotic, to use a rough phrase, had soddened rather than soothed her; however, something like a healthy sleep after a time followed. When she woke her hand was locked in Grantley’s.

“Darling, it was no vision that you saw. I have come back never to leave you again, please God. Cast all your fears away, my sweet, for I shall love her child only next best to the poor man’s daughter; so here I am for Merry Christmas, and to begin the happy New Year we’ll fling the cypress wreath away—

‘The varnished holly’s not too bright,
Nor too lively glows the lily’s light,
For the myrtle bough bids lovers live,
And that Matilda now can give.’

And our real honeymoon shall, as you always
wished it should, be spent at Castle Vivian.’’

C H A P T E R X V.

OUR little party soon broke up : the Lansfeldts went to spend their first Christmas at Lansfeldt, Bab and I to our mincepies at home. Miss Blantyre was very glad to see her cousin, and was at the meeting with Vivian, as well as could be expected ; indeed, love seemed merged in gratitude, as she thanked him for the chinchilla, which she threw gracefully around her, *à la Canova*, till Vivian told her that to tie it close up round the neck was the fashion in France, and so saved her poor chest that one winter.

Grantley was to drive me on into the town as far as the bank, after we had deposited Bab and the boxes in Ivy Lane. I was glad to see my little home again, and as I sat in the carriage, I glanced up at Grove Cottage.

Methought I saw scaling the wall, Susan, with my best blue veil tossed off, and my red Indian shawl swung gracefully back, à la *Isabelle*, but when I came home ten minutes after, my blue veil was in the top, and the red Indian shawl in my bottom drawer, while poor little Susan had on her “apern and her linsey dress ;” so of course it could not be.

Methought I saw Dorcas at my garden-gate, flirting with a soldier, and my furtive glance caught the froth of beer on that soldier’s beard ; but no, when I came back, Dorcas had been upstairs making beds all the morning ; there did seem to me something that looked like a red coat and pipe-clay, but this was on the other side of the ferry, half a mile away ; so of course it could not be.

Methought, as my nose directed my eyes downward to the kitchen, I saw my cook,—horror of horrors—giving a large dish of steak and onions to a man in blue ; it did look very like police constable Savage ; but, no, on my return I saw Savage coming from quite an opposite direction ; so of course it could not be.

Methought, behind the stained blind in old Guy's counting-house, I saw Sandy with the baker's boy at his side, and a pack of cards before him ; but no, when the carriage drove up the street, also in an opposite direction, I saw the baker's boy coming from the "Jolly Dogs," and when Vivian put me down, Sandy was certainly in the counting-house, but told me he had been reading a "pierty track of Miss Wasper's" (which he held in his hand), all the morning ; so of course it could not be.

I must say I felt a little down when Grantley cleaed my cottage of his Indian traps, and drove away ; I thought of him and Greta, and all the quick events of the past few months ; *they* were happy, I thanked God, but *I* felt bereaved of my children—I was, indeed, bereaved !

I spent my Christmas very quietly ; Christmas to me is always mournful, so indeed are all other anniversaries, for they bring up not only those that *are*, who, thanks to our tempers, are seldom very dear to us ; but those who are *not*, and these invariably are so, for

those that hurt us, we forgive ; those who loved us, we adore.

Keep no such days, the cask of life is bright and sparkling that we tap at one-and-twenty. Sip it then, but never think it will taste again as it did at twenty-one ! And, why ? It is not mankind, it is ourselves that have changed ; we had health, and joy, and youth when those that are gone were with us ! It is in suffering, forbearance, and resignation, that in after life we meet our friends ! Looking at Christmas with the eyes of the present world, its tracings are in youth of the lightest pencil of hope and ambition, its hard lines of mournful memory are graven with the double B. of Erebus.

Yet surely there is impiety in thus bewailing the past—in thus forgetting that then were the glad tidings of great joy brought to earth—the gospel of righteousness, charity, and love, the gentle Jesus came.

I bowed my head. Hugh Dacre was with his God—"not lost, but gone before."

I must now tell of his name-child, Hugh Dacre Vivian.

I went over, as I promised, in June, to Greta, that the dear friend of her Grantley might be with her ; and she did not die. No ; happy, strong, and glorious he came, a precious gift to Vivian, the child of the poor man's daughter. Such was the pugnacious tenacity with which this sturdy little Briton held on to his life, that not the shock of Lady Ramsay, not the terrors of the *Passing Bell*, not all the " omens," " portents," and " voices " of the young Methody, his mother, could loosen his grasp. He was born at Castle Vivian on the 25th of June, and he was but the advance-guard of a goodly troop of girls and boys.

The daughters of Lord Lansfeldt are very handsome girls. Even Sootie and Sarly, spite of their hot youth and former ill fame, are amiable and accomplished too. But it is Mrs. Vivian who has been truly their mother. To the Magdalen they are the daughters of Lord Lansfeldt, and they are nothing more. She but thinks of that first child of love and shame, cold in death, because she would not live in scorn—Lorraine, the pure and proud.

She has no joy in the living, hers is the wail above the dead ; for to her—though, alas, not to the world—that was Lord Lansfeldt's eldest daughter.

Strangers, who do not know her story, say that it is beautiful to see her tenderness to Jocelyn's sons before his marriage.

Lady Ramsay said to me the other day, at Castle Vivian,

“Indeed, Miss Dacre, their own mother could not have been so kind.”

You will say “Lady Ramsay” at Castle Vivian ? Aye, indeed, Lady Ramsay at Castle Vivian, but you may be sure it was not Marion Lisle.

You will scarcely believe me, but the Malvern waters did not kill Sir James. He sailed for India in the spring, taking Marion with him. A sudden illness seized her on the voyage. Wilful to the last, she took no care, inflammation ran high, and it killed her. Ah, for the Nemesis ! He had to fling her overboard. Vivian was with me when he read her death, and then he told me of



those cruel grating words. Her body was committed to the deep.

“Lost at sea!” And this was better than being “lost” on earth. Poor “Dinah” was right, for the “Hetty” was flickering dangerously near the scorching flame of perdition.

On board the same outward-bound vessel was the “favourite,” for soon after we read,

“At Madras, on landing, Chesterton Vidal, Esq. (Cheesy), for many years of H. S. M. Shady Contingent. R. I. P. *Bell's Life* please copy.”

Sir James came back to England with a lightened heart. He was a brave soldier and a thorough gentleman; but he was a kind, nay, soft-hearted man; and did he but say the word, the brand of dishonour would consign that young and pretty woman to a life-long shame. Now she was gone to her last account, where not even his protecting hand could shield her from the judgment of her God.

In about a twelvemonth afterwards he married Lucy Lumpfort, and such had been

his harass and vexation, that, once these withdrawn, Sir James seemed to take a new lease of life. The spirit had preyed upon the body, and made him the hirpling hypochondriac that he was. It had been Marion's *rôle* to jeer at, ignore, and snuff him out. Of course, there was no romance about poor Lucy's marriage; and yet it was far less selfish than most romantic marriages are, for she had thought of father, mother, sisters, brothers, which the romantic never do. Her family was poor, her father hard pressed, and Colonel Ramsay would prove a friend of inestimable value. It was a fair exchange; he gave a home to the homeless, and she brought happiness to the unhappy. She was certainly but a so-so manager, but then she was a sweet temper, modest in deportment, simple in her tastes. She met his ailments half-way, and thus half-cured him of them. She did not say, "Sir James, stop at home, you can do nothing;" but, "Sir James, come out and try." And upon the principle of "use and have," he grew as young and strong again.

We were talking once together. He said :—

“ Believe me, Miss Dacre, it was the one business of my life to prevent poor Marion’s rushing on to ruin. Now I have such faith in my wife, my mind is quite at rest. The world called me weak; it can never know how strong I was in my silence. I could not bear to see the wreck of what God had made so bright.”

So Sir James Ramsay lived on many years a very happy man. To the last he retained his pride in his favourite soldier, Vivian; and as he paid his nephew’s debts, and most generously advanced his interests, his length of days was not begrudging him. Like many a younger husband, he was far happier with his slow wife than with his fast one, though

She was not fair to outward view,
As other maidens are.”

I took possession of the Heron Height very quietly. There was no living male of my knightly race, or I should not be there. I was not entering upon the Heron

Height of Northumberland, where a long roll of my forefathers lived and died. No, mine were the gains of greed and usury, and I dared not to vaunt them, for how knew I but that the widow's curse might come with me? And yet such had been his clinging to the past, the almost piety with which he gathered his Penates around him, I could not quite despise the grey old man of Rendale, and I tried to think of him when he left his old northern home with his brother, my own grandfather, Lupus Dacre, hopeful, generous, and loyal. Alas, that life should change such a one to old Guy Decker!

Thus much of my new abode. Now for clouded, haunted, sorrow-stricken Everley. It long remained unlet; for Loraine's death was so recent, that it but deepened the sad shade of poor Glendinning's fearful end, which otherwise had mellowed away. No one from the neighbourhood would take it—the false woman's curse was there; and those who came from a distance to look at the place were always regaled, while dining at the "Jolly Dogs," by the waiter with the

strange story of Mary Bell, the forest girl, who now was Lady Lansfeldt. They shuddered at the very thought of the Swan Lake, where the blood-stained soldier and lovely girl were still said to "walk." So I had no tender at all for Everley Honour that could be called desirable, save perhaps two, one for fresh barracks ; but old Bab over-persuaded me with,—

"Miss Dagger, never let your house to men ; you don't know their pranks. Don't put yourself at their mercy."

The next tender was from a ladies' school. Here Pertun over-persuaded me with,—

"Bless my soul, Miss Dacre, never let your house to women—especially to a ladies' school ; there'll be more scandal than ever, a running away and the devil to pay, or my name's not Boltby Pertun."

What was I to do ? Not let my house to a man ! Not let my house to a woman ! Then to whom on earth was I to let it ? Horace Walpole said there were "men, women, and Herveyes ;" then I bethought me there are men, women, and Fitz-Flashes.

Indeed, Pertun divined my thoughts ; for very soon after, when paying my rent, which he always brought " reg'lar to the day," he said,—

" Now confess, Miss Dacre, you never have seen the shine of Fitz-Flash's money ? "

I softly confessed I never had seen the shine.

" You'll be done brown."

I looked black. He went on,—

" Tell 'ee what do," said my guide and philosopher ; " let Fitz-Flash go to the Honour. They lived rent-free at the Rookery ? Come, don't contradict me, I know they do ; and you know he's a bird you'll find hard to shake off his perch. Why old Guy Decker couldn't do it. Now let him live rent-free at Everley for a year or two : no one will take the place with the tale of Mrs. Jocelyn clinging to it. The Rookery will be let in a trice ; and if you can, after a bit, get quit of Fitz-Flash, by fair means or foul, their residence will send up the Honour no end ; for the silly snobs have only to be told that the house is but just vacated by the own niece of

the Marquis of Starvington, and there'll be, oh, such a rush for it!—bless my soul!"

Now, while he blessed his soul, I was taking my measures, and after some moments of mute adoration of Lord Starvington's niece, worthy of the miser's heir, I determined to raise the wind on her nobility.

I sent Baldwin Fitz-Flash as a sort of patrician *concierge* to Everley Honour. I knew he would not keep the fires up; but then he would bang the doors, and open the windows, and that would let the air through and keep the place dry.

He now quite understood he was to live rent-free. He had paid, one might call it, a sort of fish-rent for the Rookery; and I must say he was too much a gentleman to withdraw his presents: like the Danaï he still brought them—triton and minnow, salmon from the tide, and trout from the stream. Nelly, when the potichomania went out, brought me no end of bead-work in kaleidoscopic mats, which would have done to pave my hall as well as old mosaics or Minton's tilings; but glass beads are brittle,

and I was heavy, and, like angels, I feared to tread.

Poor Miss Blantyre died about six years ago, cruelly tried by all the vicissitudes of folly and fashion. She took to those fly-away bonnets we used to call kiss-me-quicks, and got acute neuralgia for the six winter months ; then she had the dreadful mumps in her poor bare chin, sporting a Dolly Varden hat ; Bab saying that "Old women ought to wear nothing on their heads but what she wore herself, namely, a cottage with a curtain"—meaning a bonnet. The March winds, howling in and out of Miss Isabelle's crinoline, laid her up for weeks and weeks until she could not move a limb ; indeed, she trifled so much with a good constitution that her vanity killed her. I do believe, had she lived for the crazy fashions of the year 1871, she would have been asinine enough to have carried panniers at her back.

Only Mr. Slab, the undertaker, was ever told her age ; and Bab then got close up to Slab's ear, and named her own, adding poor Isabelle's year and a day.

I often think with sorrow of Miss Blantyre ; for if there is a sight to make angels sigh and demons laugh, it is that most forlorn and piteous one—a vain old woman !

Miss Bab, my kind and aged friend, is still spared to me—hale and cheerful, upright and downright as ever. I scarcely trust myself to think of that sad time when she must in the course of nature go. I shall have a “heavy miss” of her.

“ Long she will fill affection’s eye,
Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind ;
Nor letter’d arrogance deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.”

I grieve to say we still have the mummers at Ravendale—Dr. Ritus, the mummer-in-chief ! Susan “dearly loves the sights.” I do not forbid them ; for then she would go there twice as often, and, worse still, “ unbeknown ! ” She told me a little time since,—

“ How bewful he did look. He looked that shiny and sparkling, he quite dazed her ; he wore vilet satin at Candlemas, and yaller at Lammes.”

Pertun swears terribly at Ritus. He has not, like Susan, anything artistic or æsthetic about him. He says,—

“Miss Dacre—bless my soul! the Lord Chamberlain is poking his nose into the other theatres, why doesn’t he just poke it in here? Those boys in their dirty bed-gowns, making faces instead of singing praises, ought to be hissed off the stage, for turning psalms into love-songs as they do.”

Yes, Dr. Ritus is flourishing; but then he has a constitution of iron, a nerve of steel; moreover, was never half in earnest like poor Vesper Prime.

If Miss Blantyre died of “insufficient clothing,” Vesper died as surely from “exhaustion from want of food.” He passed away one Maundy Thursday after the long Lenten fast; and—oh, cruel, cruel!—poor dear Tierça lives—insane!

I have been in India, and God be thanked, I never did see the Hindoo idolater crushed beneath the Car of Juggernaut; but I have here in Christian England, seen many a human sacrifice. I remember, one morning

in November, being in Russell Square, and just drawing up my window-blind, still with my candle burning, I saw the fine old Canon in residence drive past, to the early morning service at St. Paul's. That cold cathedral, the dome of Wren, was not the Car of Juggernaut; but as surely was it killing him, and the handful of folks assembled there! Yet, mayhap, there is to many a feeling of desecration in touching the old church services, long handed down by time. But not a word can be urged in defence of the new-fangled midnight ones in wind and rain, or those useless matins in frost and fog, that are now imposed on the young and enthusiastic by those who ought to know that these are the very express trains to an early grave! Our Heavenly Father says: "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Dare we then say we will have sacrifice and no mercy?

I often pray, though I shall not live to see it, and our present great innovator shall have passed away, that some future "fleeting Clarence," some embryo "King of

Crotchets," then at the helm of state, may pass a bill for the admission of "Physicians into Convocation,"—strong - nerved, clear headed, Christian-hearted men, whose voice shall be raised in one universal protest against this useless waste of life. Still let us worship the Creator "in spirit and in truth," but let it be in the true spirit of enlightenment, seeking the creature's greatest good.

When I sit alone, how grateful I feel that the Christian soldier's death should have brought one sinner to repentance, and I thank my God for the blessing He vouchsafed upon the silken cord and gentle bridle-reins that pulled up one fine fellow from "going to the bad."

They are a very happy pair, "Don Juan" and "Glendinning's child;" and the sweetest hours I ever pass I pass at Castle Vivian.

THE END.

Grantley Vibian's Song.

Music by J. N. BEHR.

Andante legato. $\text{♩} = 60$.

VOICE.

PIANO.

1. In hap-pier groves and sun-nier dells, From
2. By cry-stal spring in sun-shine's glow, 'Neath

care . . . and sor - row free, . . . Where soft - est
na - - - ture's branching tree, . . . Where nec - tar

(2)

breeze of sum - mer swells,
 sweets from flow' - rets flow,

I'll sing Love's song to thee, I'll sing Love's
 I'll drink Love's health to thee, I'll drink Love's

song to thee.
 health to thee.

(3)

3. Thy cares thy joys my faith to prove, Shall
shared ... and ligh - tened be, ... While I but
ask, my on - ly Love, to live and

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the voice, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The lyrics "3. Thy cares thy joys my faith to prove, Shall" are written below the staff. The middle staff is for the piano, with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The bottom staff is for the piano, with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The lyrics "shared ... and ligh - tened be, ... While I but" and "ask, my on - ly Love, to live and" are written below the middle staff. The music is in common time, with various note values including eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano parts include harmonic support and bass lines.

(4)

die for thee, to live and die for thee.

This system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for the first system of the score. The vocal line consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features eighth-note chords in the right hand and eighth-note bass notes in the left hand. The vocal part ends with a fermata over the word 'thee'.

di - - - mi - - - nu - -

This system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features eighth-note chords in the right hand and eighth-note bass notes in the left hand. The vocal part ends with a fermata over the word 'nu'.

- - en - - do.

This system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features eighth-note chords in the right hand and eighth-note bass notes in the left hand. The vocal part ends with a fermata over the word 'do'.



